

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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THIS is the 181st issue of this little bulletin. With it we begin the sixteenth volume; and despite Mr. Petrillo's ban on recordings the record industry seems to be going along very nicely. More and more persons are interested in building record libraries and a wider variety of recordings is continually being made available for their selection. There was a time when with a Victor, Columbia and Decca catalog in hand a buyer would have listings of practically all the classical records that were generally available. That is not true today because there are several dozen publishers of classical records in America; and in addition to their output, large shipments, containing many very important items, are continually arriving from abroad. With this ever expanding field, the responsibility of the editors of THE NEW RECORDS becomes greater and greater, for it is the aim of this little publication to cover all classical recordings (both domestic and imported).

During the last few months we have been advertising THE NEW RECORDS in a number of leading newspapers throughout the country including *The New York Times*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *The Los Angeles Times* and *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. Hundreds of new subscribers were secured by this means and we take this opportunity of welcoming them with the hope that they will continue to find our little bulletin of value. Many more persons are now reading THE NEW RECORDS than at any time during its long history.

Last month we included a renewal blank with each copy mailed, and so many renewals were received that it has been impossible for us to check our mailing list. We are, therefore, carrying over all of our subscribers, whether they renewed or not. We cannot continue this

practice beyond this month, so if you have not as yet sent in your renewal, you should do so at once in order that you will not miss any issues.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues published during the last fifteen years are available. The price is 5c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 125 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

ORCHESTRA



Beethoven: Symphony No. 9 in D Minor, Op. 125 ("Choral"). Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky, with Frances Yeend (soprano), Eunice Alberts (contralto), David Lloyd (tenor), James Pease (bass), and the Berkshire Festival Chorus. 8-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1190. \$11. Also available in vinylite, DV-12. \$17.

This set was recorded at Tanglewood, Massachusetts, during the Berkshire Festival in August 1947, for which Robert Shaw prepared the Festival Chorus. The choral parts are done with clarity and precision; and the quartet of soloists, whose names may be unfamiliar to many readers, is quite good. Koussevitzky's reading of the score is remarkably (and frankly, to us, surprisingly) free from interpretative excesses. This performance could almost be called orthodox, for it certainly is free from distortions of *tempi* and dynamics. The orchestra sounds wonderful, and Koussevitzky has achieved remarkable color and balance and sonority. We cannot say that his reading is highly charged with inspiration, but here again is that obvious fact that this gigantic work was chopped up into four minute intervals for recording purposes. It could hardly be expected that the fervor and intensity of an actual performance before an audience could be duplicated under the circumstances necessary for recording. That is the great intangible factor which mars so many recordings. Would it not be better for the record collector to suffer a few extraneous noises, which he does in the concert hall anyhow, to have

a recorded performance with the participants at a peak of inspiration, in an unbroken chain?

The reproduction of the set offers a maximum of echo on the first few sides, which seems to diminish later on. The heavy choral and orchestral passages in the final movement present the effect of the orchestra at a distance, and the sopranos of the chorus predominating. Elsewhere the set is clear. We believe Ormandy's recording is clearer throughout, but neither he nor Koussevitzky supercede Weingartner on interpretative merit. And none of the three of them match Jochum, who with the Hamburg Philharmonic made a monumental recording of this work for Telefunken, which is available here and there in this country on other labels. It is, in addition, a thrilling reproduction. However, of the domestic ones, we believe most persons will prefer the new Koussevitzky set, and we recommend it as the best available.

Delius Society Set. Concerto for Piano and Orchestra (five sides). **Marche Caprice** (one side). **A Song of the High Hills** (six sides). The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Luton Choir conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham, with Betty Beecham (piano). 6-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1185. \$8.50.

The champion of Delius, Sir Thomas Beecham, is around again with some of the master's exquisite music. Sir Thomas recorded great quantities of Delius recently in England, during a Delius Festival, and Victor is to be congratulated on losing no time in releasing some of it here. *A Song of the High Hills* receives its first recording, as does the *Marche Caprice*. The latter is an early opus that serves as a nice filler in the set. The *Song of the High Hills* was new to us, and being an ardent Delius fan, we naturally found it interesting. We can easily see where many others might become tired of the work before the sixth side is reached, for there is a certain sameness about it. Sir Thomas gives one of his unique Delius performances that is matchless, and we devoured every minute of it. The ceaseless subtleties of Delius hold an irresistible fascination, and, as in *Appalachia*, the chorus provides additional color. In this case the choir is wordless. *Appalachia* is a stronger and more interesting work, being in variation form (and superb variations they are).

One previous recording was made of the *Piano Concerto* by Benno Moiseiwitsch (reviewed in September 1947; imported records). We rather think Moiseiwitsch cut loose in this post-romantic, early opus of Delius', more than Lady Beecham cares to. The Beechams' performance is almost too highly refined for the type of music it is, or maybe Sir Thomas wanted it that way. Even the tone of the piano, as recorded, is extremely round and mellow and not brilliant. Anyone hearing the Beecham set first might feel Moiseiwitsch is too flashy, so your own

taste will have to be the judge. The album, as a whole, is quite a feast for Deliusites, and something for all collectors to consider. The reproduction is wide range and clear, with some stunning effects in the *Song of the High Hills*.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 1 in G minor, Op. 13 ("Winter Daydreams"). Nine sides, and **Tchaikovsky: Eugen Onégin—Waltz (Act III)**. Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fabien Sevitzky. 5-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1189. \$7.25.

The Indianapolis Orchestra sounds very fine in this recording, and with Sevitzky's understanding feeling for the music they make the Tchaikovsky *First Symphony* sound surprisingly good. Sevitzky's treatment definitely strengthens the score, not by any chicanery, but by sound and admirable conducting. While Victor has not maintained a perfect balance throughout, the general impression is that of pleasing sonority. The acoustics of the hall seem ideal too. From the standpoint of reproduction alone this set is easily superior to the Disc set No. 801, with Rachmilovich conducting the Santa Monica Orchestra (reviewed in August 1947). Rachmilovich's reading is valid; Sevitzky's is more than that.

"Winter Daydreams" is the title bestowed on this work by its composer. The score was revised by him several times, and as it now stands it is a rather uneven work which, however, contains many unmistakable Tchaikovskian characteristics. Chief among these traits is melody, and next would be the rhythmic patterns and orchestral style. The first movement subtitled "Reveries on a Winter Road" amounts to a pleasant descriptive tone-painting. The second movement, like the first, is another picture subtitled "Desolate Country, Country of Mists." Here is where we find some charming melody and a bit of drama. The Scherzo does not, to us, hang together too well; but the final movement moves on to a brilliant finale, a bit trite in spots, but effective, anyhow.

The *Eugen Onégin Waltz*, on the final side, is directed in good academic fashion by Sevitzky, but his band has a few lapses of pitch and poor coordination—maybe they were tired. That, however, is a small matter in this otherwise excellent set.

S.

Schumann: Symphony No. 3 in E flat, Op. 97 ("Rhenish"). Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1184. \$6.

It does not seem six and one-half years since we reviewed the Bruno Walter "Rhenish" (Col. MM-464); but in September 1941 our enthusiasm ran mighty high when we heard his marvelous account of the score. Hearing this new set by Mitropoulos several times re-kindled our love for this rich work

and caused us to bring out the Walter set for a careful comparison. One thing is certain: Mitropoulos harps on the horn passages too much throughout this work, although those who have heard him conduct in person know this to be one of his habits. The first movement is played with tremendous vitality, and the initial impression is fine. By the time the symphony is over, one feels that it has had too vital a treatment all the way through, for the final impression is that it has been noisy and brassy. For those who feel that Schumann's music exhibits weaknesses—and there are many who believe this—Mitropoulos will supply the rock-ribbed strength and sonority that pleases them. Furthermore, the reproduction of this set will enhance the effect, for it is big and loud and at times coarse. We must state a preference for the more elastic quality of Walter's opinion of the "Rhenish" which we find more eloquent and knowing.

The "Rhenish" is deservedly the most popular of the Schumann symphonies. Cast in five movements, it is nevertheless a rather short work of about thirty minutes duration. Which is to say it is to the point, and never fails to sustain interest. The "cathedral scene" of the fourth movement is most inspiring despite its brevity; the heroic opening theme of the first movement is always impressive. While Schumann indicated no program for the music, he was obviously much inspired by the Rhineland and the Cologne Cathedral with which he had become newly acquainted. The richly melodic and lovable "Rhenish" should be in the symphony section of every library, simply because it is an enjoyable work. S.

Massenet: Scènes Alsaciennes (Orchestral Suite No. 7). Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-723. \$4.60.

Here is a thoroughly ingratiating, though unfamiliar, album which reappears on records after a lapse of many years (previous recordings were imported). Known principally for his operas, Massenet also composed in other idioms. Some of his oratorios and cantatas were performed with great success during his lifetime. Of the many orchestral works, including seven orchestral suites, *Scènes Alsaciennes* is the most popular. His "Angélus" from *Scènes Pittoresques*, enjoys a mild popularity despite its obvious banality.

Massenet composed *Scènes Alsaciennes* a decade after the Franco-Prussian War, during which he served as a member of the National Guard of France and saw active service in the siege of Paris. He wrote descriptive notes for the score in which he recalled impressions of his favorite scenes in an Alsatian village. The suite is in four movements: Sunday Morning, At the Tavern, Under the Linden Trees, and Sunday Evening. It is precisely the type of descriptive music you would expect, done with

charm and gay sentiment, and fashioned with a deft hand.

Mitropoulos conducts the score with a sincerity that bespeaks his firm belief in, and knowledge of, the composer's intentions. He catches the atmosphere perfectly, which is the essence of this work, for it is certainly atmosphere which describes these various scenes. From the somber Sunday Morning to the jovial Tavern, through the sentimental Sunday afternoon to the boisterous evening hours, Mitropoulos captures the various hues and vapors with fine contrast. Such admittedly light music always benefits greatly from a virtuoso but sincere performance. It has been well recorded, the solo instruments being particularly bright and clear. This set is especially recommended to those who revel in lighter and less ponderous symphonic fare. S.

Brahms: Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 73. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-725. \$7.10.

This is good, solid Brahms, fine workmanship from Rodzinski, and clean, sturdy playing from the orchestra. There is not quite the sparkle of Beecham's humor and delicacy (Col. MM-265, which we pray they will not discontinue), nor is it as flamboyant as Monteux (Vic. DM-1065). We do not like the Ormandy or Barbirolli versions for various reasons. This album is a worthy companion to Rodzinski's recording of the Brahms *First Symphony*, which has generally been conceded to be one of the best. Rodzinski plays Brahms with virility and strength, but not with coarseness, and always turns in a performance that is admirable and logical and not mannered. The present set may be counted among Rodzinski's best efforts in the recording field. The reproduction is big and warm and persuasive.

The *Second Symphony* followed the *First* by one year, and since the initial performance opinions have changed, although they still vary, as to the content of the work. The *First* was considered rather austere and forbidding; the *Second* was considered gay and happy and even earned the nickname "sunny." Lawrence Gilman expressed the opinion that time has set these two symphonies in a different light for the present generation. He said, "The *First* seems to have borrowed something of the rich tenderness, something of the warmly human quality, that was regarded as the special property of the *Second*, and to have conferred upon the latter, in return, something of its own sobriety and depth of feeling." Some consider it Brahms's "Pastoral Symphony" while others discern an undercurrent of tragedy. Gilman could agree with neither and thought if we were less eager to put works of art in watertight compartments, we should discover that such problems are for the most part imaginary. Rodzinski evidently subscribes to that opinion, for his reading embraces both schools of thought. S.

Khachaturian: Masquerade Suite. Five sides, and **Ippolitov-Ivanov: In the Village** (from "Caucasian Sketches"). Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-729. \$4.60.

As a lesson in how to take trite music and make it sound great—or, at least, far better than it actually is—this set is not only a lesson but a whole course for aspiring conductors. When *Masquerade's* first recording (Asch Set 800) was reviewed in these columns in May 1947, we offered the opinion that it has not the freshness and impact of *Gayne*. What it lacks in originality and strength, however, it makes up in common everyday "appeal" that is so irresistible to a vast section of the record buying public. Victor recognized this by issuing a recording of *Masquerade* in December, played by the Boston "Pops" Orchestra (DM-1166). For some reason Fiedler changed the order of the five sections, the reason possibly being that they were thereby squeezed on four sides, fast *tempi* aiding the operation. Rachmilovich on Asch, and Stokowski in the present set take five sides, play the music in its logical order which permits better contrast, and use more leisurely *tempi*. Fiedler gets the Offenbach can-can effect to a degree that we feel is detrimental to the music. It is largely lush and romantic music, even though it may contain an impudent Galop at the end. But surely the opening Waltz, the luscious Nocturne and Romance, and the Mazurka lean more toward Tchaikovsky than Offenbach.

Stokowski is liable to pop up on any label with any orchestra. Columbia is fortunate to have recorded him last fall during his appearances with the New York Philharmonic, during which time he performed this work, including one broadcast performance. This set is a capital job, including rich resonant reproduction. If you like the *Masquerade* music, Stokey's version will "send" you. S.

Schubert: Overture in the Italian Style in C Major. Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Malcolm Sargent. 1-12" disc (C-72464D). \$1.25.

(This annotation is reprinted from the February, 1946, issue. It appeared in this place when the imported recording of this work was reviewed.)

There is an interesting story in connection with this overture and its companion in D. It seems that Schubert had attended a performance of Rossini's opera *Tancredi* and came home full of the spirit of the Italian's music. He said, however, that it would be easy to write such overtures as Rossini did for his operas and that he could do it on the spur of the moment. His friends wagered him a glass of good wine that he could not do it, but he did, and thus we have these two overtures. The one in C is record-

ed on this disc by the Liverpool Philharmonic.

We doubt that anyone would mistake Schubert's music for Rossini's—it just doesn't have the true Italian sparkle and wit. However, it is pleasant enough to listen to even if it doesn't compare with the product of Rossini. It has been nicely played and well recorded on the present record.

Khachaturian: Gayne Ballet Suite—Sabre Dance. Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Artur Rodzinski. One side, and **Khachaturian: Masquerade Suite—Waltz.** Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-12-0209). \$1.25.

A year or so ago the Russian composer Khachaturian was practically unknown in this country, but largely because of the radio and recordings his fame has spread from coast to coast. Numerous records of his compositions are being released and seem to be meeting a ready market. The one listed above contains selections from two of his most popular works. We don't think the music is profound but it is certainly pleasing and just the sort of music that will appeal to a wide audience. Two top orchestras conducted by highly regarded directors are represented on the present disc. Reproduction—excellent.

If you are not acquainted with Khachaturian, here is a painless and inexpensive way to become introduced to him.

Glinka: Kamarinskaya (Fantasie on two Russian folk songs). Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 1-12" disc (C-12715D). \$1.25.

This pleasing work dates from 1848 and is based on a couple of Russian wedding songs and dance tunes. While it is not of great importance, its simple gaiety, genial charm and reckless spontaneity, make it a rather attractive selection. Reiner and the Pittsburgh Symphony give it a spirited performance which merits high praise, and Columbia has achieved a very faithful reproduction.

Josef Strauss: Music of the Spheres Waltz, Op. 235. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-12-0068). \$1.25.

No orchestra can play such music better than the Boston "Pops." The present disc ably demonstrates that fact. Superb reproduction is an added feature.

Offenbach—arr. Walteufel: Valse "Tales of Hoffmann." Mayfair Orchestra conducted by Walter Goehr. 1-10" disc (V-B-9521). \$1.42.

Some pleasing tunes from *Tales of Hoffmann* nicely played by the Mayfair Orchestra conducted by Walter Goehr—dinner music in the refined manner splendidly recorded by HMV.

CONCERTO



Ravel: Piano Concerto for the Left Hand. Robert Casadesus (piano) with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-288. \$3.35.

The Piano Concerto for the Left Hand is a brilliant *tour de force*. Most thoughtful musicians rate it among Ravel's major contributions to the music of the first decades of the 20th Century.

The history of this piece is interesting as it was written by the composer for a famed Austrian pianist, Paul Wittgenstein, who had lost an arm in the first World War. Ravel accepted the challenge of writing a concerto for this one armed artist; the result was the present composition.

Far from being easy, the *Concerto for Left Hand* is a mass of technical booby-traps and finger-twisting difficulties. It is a composition that boasts a great variety of themes and patterns, including many jazz-effects and an allegro which has the sprightly quality of a tarantelle. The final cadenza is of great brilliance; difficult for both pianist and orchestra.

Wittgenstein played the *première* of the concerto, which took place in Vienna in January 1932.

The present recording was undoubtedly made at the time that Robert Casadesus played the concerto with Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra. These concerts took place on January 17, 18 and 20, 1947 in the Academy of Music, where without doubt the recording session also occurred.

Casadesus is more or less of a specialist in this work; he plays it with great authority. Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra are also in fine form. The whole thing sounds excellently rehearsed.

Reproduction emerges a bit thick, with a preponderance of bass. Surfaces of this particular copy were inexcusably bad. D.

Schumann: Concerto in A minor, Op. 54. Artur Rubinstein (piano) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1176. \$6.

Now that Arrau is no longer in the fold of its artists, Victor has lost no time in replacing his recent recording of the Schumann *Piano Concerto* (DM-1009) with a more competent one by Rubinstein. The Myra Hess version (DM-473) has long been a favorite as well as a source of controversy among the musically enlightened. Hess is indeed eloquent and appealing, although the romantic sweetness of her interpretation is too cloying for some. Arrau manages a clean and clear performance which in many ways exceeds Hess for lushness, since he is even fussier and far more mannered. While one prominent author of a book on records has expressed

a preference for the Yves Nat recording (Col. MM-196), we were never much impressed with this effort and felt Columbia has long since been in dire need of a good modern recording of this perennial favorite.

Here, then, is a recording to satisfy all. Rubinstein has completely circumvented the romantic pitfall and turns in a performance of commanding strength and virility which, however, is not marked by excessively fast *tempi* or cold playing. It is merely a straightforward approach. It is a convincing performance that will wear well. In fact, our first impression was unfavorable; our second, rather neutral; but the third time we played it we could appreciate Rubinstein's approach to this work. We must admit a disappointment in the accompaniment. Steinberg is generally an able conductor, but he does little more than keep the orchestra with the artist. He is handicapped with a smaller than usual orchestra that was probably insufficiently rehearsed in the subtleties of the score. The reproduction is adequate, lacking a shade in orchestral resonance, but yielding a big, bright, clear piano tone. S.

Saint-Saens: Violin Concerto No. 3, in B Minor Op. 61. Louis Kaufman (violin) with the Santa Monica Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jacques Rachmilovich. 3-12" discs in album. Disc Set No. 805. \$4.75.

The other evening we heard this work performed at a concert of the Philadelphia Orchestra. That occasion marked the first time that it had appeared on the program of that great musical organization in over twenty years. As we listened to it, we wondered why it was not played more often. It certainly has everything that should make it popular with the average concert audience and it offers the soloist ample opportunity to display his virtuosity. It is really very pretty music—tuneful, and evident enough for anyone to grasp and appreciate at sight. True it is not great music, but it is pleasant to listen to and quite catchy. We heard a number of persons whistling the theme from the second movement in the lobby during the intermission.

The next day we looked it up in the catalogs and found that the only recording listed was a very old imported one by Henry Merckel, which we doubt is presently available. Then Disc sent us a review copy of the album listed above. We enjoyed listening to it very much. On the whole we cannot report that it is an outstanding job as far as reproduction is concerned. Mr. Kaufman's playing is excellent — one might say spectacular. He is away out in front of the orchestra—so far out in front of the orchestra that his supporting players seem to be rather lost in the dust. Solo violinists may like this, but we hold for a much more balanced performance. However, in view of the fact that there are no other available recordings of this pleasant music, it is very possible

that this album may enjoy reasonable popularity.

R.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Telemann: Trio Sonata. Marcel Moyses (flute), Blanche Honegger (Violoncello) and Louis Moyses (piano). 1-10" disc (OL-20). \$1.60.

Weber: Adagio and Rondo, C Minor, Op. 35 (for Bassoon and Orchestra). Fernand Oubradous (bassoon) with Orchestra of the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire conducted by Roger Désormière. 1-12" disc (OL-14). \$2.10.

We selected from the L'Oiseau-Lyre catalog, which we mentioned editorially in our December 1947 issue, these two discs as outstanding examples of the recordings made by this unique French publisher. They both contain unusual little works of much charm. The first is a lovely trio by the very prolific German composer Georg Phillip Telemann (1681-1767), and the second is a most attractive work for bassoon and orchestra by the founder of the German Romantic school, Carl Maria Weber (1786-1826).

Both selections have been most faithfully recorded by very able musicians and either or both of them would be a worthy addition to any collection of chamber music.

Stravinsky: Pastorale for Violin and Wind Quartet. Joseph Szigeti (violin), Mitchell Miller (oboe), Robert McGinnis (clarinet), Bert Gassman (English horn), and Sol Schoenbach (bassoon), conducted by Igor Stravinsky. One side, and **Stravinsky: Russian Maiden's Song.** Joseph Szigeti (violin) and Igor Stravinsky (piano). 1-12" disc (C-72495D). \$1.25.

We recall the delightful recording of Stravinsky's *Pastorale* that the fine violinist Samuel Dushkin made for English Columbia a dozen or so years ago, but to tell the truth, we had quite forgotten it until the present disc came to the studio. To our mind this little piece is one of the most delightful and enjoyable things Stravinsky has ever written. It has an engaging appeal, and if one will take the trouble to listen to it a time or two with an open mind, he certainly should find it a refreshing musical experience. Szigeti and his accompanying players give a most delightful performance.

Russian Maiden's Song played by Szigeti and the composer makes a suitable selection for the reverse side of this worth-while disc.

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OPERA



Gluck: Orpheus and Eurydice. (Abridged version sung in Italian). Kathleen Ferrier (contralto), Zoe Vlachopoulos (soprano), Anne Ayars (soprano) with the Glyndebourne Festival Chorus and The Southern Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Fritz Stiedry. 7-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-39. \$15.75.

Decca's fine new recording of Gluck's *Orfeo* is made with the *ffrr* technique. It is obvious that great care has been lavished on this new set, which boasts the Glyndebourne Festival Chorus and the Southern Philharmonic Orchestra for a rich background. Kathleen Ferrier, the most active contralto in England today, is *Orfeo*, while support is given by Anne Ayars and Zoe Vlachopoulos, sopranos.

Unavoidably, the new recording comes into direct comparison with Columbia's version of *Orfeo* (MOP-15), which is sung in French. For those who prefer the Italian text and *tempi*, which are far speedier, the present set will fill the bill. However, though Kathleen Ferrier is an admirable contralto, her singing of the music of *Orfeo* cannot compare with the sublime performance of Alice Raveau in the Columbia album. Mme. Raveau's spaciousness of style, her almost Olympian serenity, her classic rendition of the recitatives, are among the most treasured experiences in recorded music. Miss Ferrier adheres to Fritz Stiedry's far quicker *tempi*. Thus, her *Che faro senza Eurydice?* occupies but two-thirds of a record-side whereas the French contralto covers two full record-sides for the same piece. This will give you some idea of the divergence in *tempi*.

Miss Ferrier sings the music fluently and agreeably; but the sense of personal loss and inward desolation, so overpoweringly communicated by Mme. Raveau, is surely missing here. Among the most charming elements in the new album is the exquisite voicing of *Questo asil* (the aria of the *Blessed Shade*) by Ann Ayars, the American soprano. Miss Ayars, who is remembered for some excellent performances at the New York City Center, also sings the music of Eurydice most beautifully. Zoe Vlachopoulos displays a fresh, young voice as Amore.

Because of the quicker *tempi*, the Decca version seems able to get more of the Gluck score into its recorded performance than Columbia. Both the scene between *Orfeo* and Eurydice, and the *finale* are considerably extended.

Fritz Stiedry is a vital and excellent conductor, and the chorus and orchestra respond to his leading admirably. Personally, this writer prefers the more spacious *tempi* of the French recording; but that is a matter of individual opinion.

The gap of some 15 years between these two

recordings is not as great, from a technical standpoint, as you might think. The Columbia album still sounds remarkably resonant and well balanced, but the Decca set, when all is said and done, does have a slight technical edge in sheer recording technique.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Operatic Arias. Ferruccio Tagliavini (tenor) with the RCA Victor Orchestra Conducted by Antal Dorati. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-1191. \$3.50. Also available in vinylite; VO-13. \$5.

It seems a pity that RCA Victor in its initial recordings of Ferruccio Tagliavini should have duplicated three (out of four selections) of his Cetra records. The arias from *Rigoletto*, *L'Elisir d'Amore* and *L'Arlesiana* were also made at those earlier recording sessions.

Several things are apparent in a comparison of these records. Mr. Tagliavini has lost much of the sobby tone in which he used to indulge—to the detriment of his singing—and his voice has, in the interim, developed from a purely lyric tenor into what could be now safely called a *lirico spinto*.

The aria *Una furtive lagrima* is beautifully sung in this new edition; so are the selections from *L'Arlesiana* and *Rigoletto*. In fact, here are Italian operatic arias sung with the correct style and vocal color.

The only new selection is the *O Paradiso* from *L'Africana*, which is presented with fine breadth.

Recording and surfaces are excellent. Mr. Tagliavini's voice seems a *natural* for recording purposes. The orchestra is under the direction of Antal Dorati, well-known as a conductor of Ballet Russe. D.

Menotti: "The Medium" and "The Telephone" (complete operas). (Sung in English). Evelyn Keller, Marie Powers, Beverly Dame, Frank Rogier, Catherine Mastice, and orchestra conducted by Emanuel Balaban. 10-12" discs in two volumes. Columbia Set MM-726. \$14.70.

NOTE: This set was received too late for review this month. A review of it by Max de Schauensee will appear in our April issue.

CHORAL



Bach: St. Matthew Passion (exerpts). The Bach Choir, Elsie Suddaby (soprano), Kathleen Ferrier (contralto), Eric Greene (tenor), William Parsons and Bruce Boyce (basses), and the Jacques Orchestra conducted by Dr. Reginald Jacques with organ and harpsichord accompaniment. 7-12" discs in album. Decca set EDA-43. \$15.75.

These excerpts from Bach's great *St. Matthew*

Passion represent only a small portion of this colossal work. Nevertheless, they are well selected and are better recorded than anything yet put on records of Bach's towering masterpiece.

The *ffrr* recording technique is ever apparent and the excerpts are handled with the correct oratorio traditions plus a desirable reverence of spirit. Fine soloists, the Bach Choir, and the Jacques Orchestra, Dr. Reginald Jacques conducting, make this British album desirable in many ways.

The chorus is particularly commendable; its singing of the chorale, which most of us know as *Oh sacred head surrounded*, is impressively religious in feeling. The cry of *Barrabas!*, as Pilate offers the mob Jesus or Barrabas for freedom, carries shocking dramatic impact.

The music of the *Evangelist* is sung by a curiously uneven tenor, one Eric Greene, who despite all sorts of vocal peculiarities, always seems to get there. The aria *Give Me Back My Lord* is on the tubby and ponderous side, as sung by William Parsons.

Kathleen Ferrier's flowing legato in *Have Mercy Lord on Me* is reminiscent of Marian Anderson's oratorio style and vocal features, and Elsie Suddaby's soprano is clear and employed in an excellent Bach style. Bruce Boyce sings the small parts of *Peter* and *Pilate*, while Dr. Peasgood at the organ, and Dr. Lofthouse at the harpsichord, lend authenticity to the instrumental background. D.

Handel: The Messiah. (Sung in English). Elsie Suddaby (soprano), Marjorie Thomas (contralto), Hedde Nash (tenor), and Trevor Antony (bass), with the Luton Choral Society and Special Choir and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham, with organ accompaniment. 21-12" discs in two albums. RCA Victor Set DMC-121 (DM-1194 and DM-1195). \$28.25.

Commissioned by RCA Victor for release in America, this new complete recording of Handel's *Messiah*, with Sir Thomas Beecham conducting, may well stand as the definitive performance for years to come.

Made in England in February 1947 during a period which Sir Thomas describes as "the peak of austerity", when lack of heat and shortage of electricity hampered the studios, the vast work was finally, despite manifold difficulties, completed.

The first side of Volume I contains an introductory talk by the redoubtable Sir Thomas, in which he says that there have been a mere half dozen satisfactory performances of Handel's great oratorio in the last 150 years. His reasons for this state of affairs are that Handel's music is generally misunderstood, and that the average conductor does not avail himself of the composer's implicit markings and instructions.

Sir Thomas goes on to say that the clarity and balance between chorus and orchestra is nearly always distorted because large-scale performances utilize choruses sometimes 20 times the size of the orchestral resources. He cites choruses of 5,000 when the oratorio has been given in the Crystal Palace in London.

To rectify this, Sir Thomas has employed four separate choruses in this recording—two professional bodies of 42 and 65 respectively, and an amateur group of 250 for the larger numbers. It is thus through the variety of effects that some of the potential monotony of Handel's oratorio has been avoided.

Just a year ago, Columbia released its *Messiah* albums which featured the Huddersfield Choral Society. A comparison with the present recording is more or less inevitable.

For clarity and balance, Sir Thomas wins hands down, though his rival recording is more impressive from the point-of-view of volume and massed sound. Sir Thomas' version makes the same impression as do many of the recordings of Robert Shaw and his chorus.

Soloists here are hardly outstanding, but you may be sure they are well versed in the Handelian traditions—diction, agility and general classic style.

Elsie Suddaby has a clear, rather bloodless soprano which she employs with rather gratifying purity. Marjorie Thomas' light contralto finds its best medium in *He was Despised* which she sings admirably. Hedde Nash, a well-known British tenor, is entirely acceptable, while Trevor Antony's light, bright basso has the requisite agility for the florid measures.

Recording is admirable.—It is obvious that this historic set has received the loving care of everyone from Sir Thomas down to the last chorister.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

To My Mother. Phil Spitalny and his Hour of Charm All-Girl Orchestra and Choir. 3-10" discs in album. Charm Records Set No. 2. \$3.85.

Here is a set of discs that might have enjoyed a tremendous sale if the recording had been even fair, but judging from the sample set sent us, we must say that the reproduction for the most part is definitely bad. It is screechy and the accompaniments at times sound as if the music were played on a comb with tissue paper over its teeth rather than a thirty-piece orchestra. We recall that when Phil Spitalny made records for Columbia with his All-Girl Orchestra and Choir, their recordings were excellent, and the albums he made were, and still are, very popular. Too bad he didn't stay with Columbia! Ordinarily we wouldn't list an album containing such poor reproduction, but Spitalny is too prominent to be ignored, and the present album has had such wide publicity that we feel compelled to warn our readers to hear

it before they order it.

Martha Keene and Betty Kelly handle the solo work, and Evelyn and Her Magic Violin are much in evidence. The selections are: *Mother Dear, Pray For Me; My Mother's Rosary; Silver Threads Among the Gold; You, Mother Dear; Rock-A-Bye Baby; Mother Dearest, Mother Fairest; and The Old Re-frain.*

Fill Thou My Life ("Richmond"). **Thou art the Way** ("St. James"). **O Help Us, Lord** ("Nun danket all"). Choir of the Royal School of Church Music directed by Sir Sidney H. Nicholson with organ accompaniment. 1-12" disc (RSCM-ROX 197). \$2.10.

We sing the Praise ("Bow Brickhill"). **Sing Praise to God** ("Laus Deo"). Choir of the Royal School of Church Music directed by Sir Sidney H. Nicholson with organ accompaniment. 1-12" disc (RSCM-ROX 198). \$2.10.

Another shipment from England of The Royal School of Church Music Records has just arrived, and thus we may list two more of these discs which were not previously brought to the attention of our readers. These hymns are beautifully sung by an excellent choir of men and boys with fine organ accompaniments. They are, of course, in the tradition of the English Church, and were recorded in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, London.

We will be pleased to send to any of our readers who request it a complete list of these recordings. Just drop a card to the publishers of this bulletin asking for a list of The Royal School of Church Music Records.

VOCAL



Schubert: Die Schöne Müllerin, Op. 25. (Sung in German). Aksel Schiötz (tenor) and Gerald Moore (piano). 8-12" discs (V-DB-6252 to DB-6259) in albums. \$21.00.

On these imported HMV recordings, of smooth and glassy surfaces, we may well find the definitive recording of Schubert's great song-cycle, *Die Schöne Müllerin* (The Maid of the Mill). The artists are: a much-heralded Danish tenor, Aksel Schiötz, and that prince of accompanists, Gerald Moore.

Mr. Schiötz, a smooth, lyric tenor, is booked for an extensive tour of this country next season, and it is probably a foregone conclusion that he will repeat his European and British successes here.

The first thing that strikes one on listening to these records is the utter integrity of the performance. Both singer and pianist treat Schubert's song-cycle far more objectively than Mme. Lotte Lehmann, who cannot avoid putting so much of her highly personalized self into whatever she undertakes. A singer's

approach to music of this kind boils down to a matter of personal taste and preference, but it would seem that the Schiötz-Moore performance adds up to an ideal one for Schubert purists.

The tenor's voice is smooth and lyric but in no way remarkable. It possesses little color; in fact, sometimes it gives a rather bloodless impression. Smoothness triumphs over tone quality. Phrasing, feeling for style and naturalness of emission here predominate to the advantage of Schubert's music. Mr. Schiötz's singing of *Das Wandern*, for instance, and especially of *Mein!*, is sheer delight. For such a song as *Ungehduld* you may find him lacking in thrust and temperament. Again, this comes down to a matter of approach.

Gerald Moore, at the piano, is if anything, even more delightful than Mr. Schiötz. It is hard to imagine the piano part of *Die Schöne Müllerin* more enchantingly done. As the tenor's co-artist, rather than his mere accompanist, Mr. Moore indeed emerges as the mainspring and fundamental inspiration of the entire performance. What a lesson these records should be to the many indifferent accompanists one hears!

Surfaces, labels, and general appearance of these records are something that HMV's American sister—RCA-Victor—might emulate to enormous advantage.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Marks: Mr. Lincoln and his Gloves. One side and **Kleinsinger: Absalom, My Son.** George London (bass) with Josef Blatt (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0238). \$1.25.

George London, the brilliant young American bass-baritone, who has appeared in opera at the Hollywood Bowl and with the San Francisco Opera Company, makes his first appearance on RCA Victor records this month. He might have chosen more attractive selections for his debut; but then we suppose that there are many persons who are intrigued by such pieces as *Mr. Lincoln and His Gloves*, even if we are not. This work, which is partly sung and partly spoken, was written by Carl Sandburg and music was composed for it by Gerald Marks at the request of the author. It is in the usual homespun style of Mr. Sandburg and reads much better than it sounds as a semi-musical selection. It is alternately humorous and grave, and may give school children a side light on the character of Mr. Lincoln; except for that we can see little value in *Mr. Lincoln and His Gloves*.

Absalom, My Son is based on the Biblical story with a musical setting by George Kleinsinger. It is no great shakes as a musical composition.

Mr. London displays a voice of fine quality and his diction is excellent. He does the best he can with the available material. Let us hope that his future recordings contain more worth-while selections.

Brahms: Zigeunerlieder, Op. 103 (after the Hungarian by Hugo Conrat). Lotte Lehmann (soprano) with Paul Ulanowsky (piano) (Sung in German). 2-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1188. \$3.

Collectors of Brahms lieder will surely welcome this little album for it contains the only available recording of that composer's *Zigeunerlieder Op. 103*. Several recordings of this group of songs were made abroad but we haven't seen a copy of any of them in dealers' stocks for years.

Originally Brahms wrote eleven Gypsy Songs for vocal quartet and piano during a visit to Switzerland in the summer of 1887. There was a demand for these for solo voice and so he selected eight of them and so arranged them, and thus we have Opus 103. While the texts are based on Hungarian folk songs, the music is very much more German than Hungarian Gypsy. The spirit of these songs may be Gypsy but the music is thoroughly grounded in the German tradition of the composer's time. We think that they are delightful and Miss Lehmann sings them in a manner that will doubtless please even the most discerning. Paul Ulanowsky lends such highly artistic support that it makes these recordings gems in the field of Brahms lieder.

The German texts of these eight songs with English translations will be found on the inside cover of the album.

Songs of Robert Schumann. Blanche Thebom (mezzo-soprano) with William Hughes (piano) and Laura Newell (harp) (Sung in German and English). 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-1187. \$5.

This album reached the studio a few hours before time to go to press and thus we had only the opportunity of running through the records hurriedly. It would seem that Miss Thebom has given very satisfactory performances and that the accompaniments were attractive and thoroughly adequate.

Miss Thebom has selected for this album the following Schumann songs: *Melancholie, Op. 74, No. 6; Er ist's! Op. 79, No. 23; Zwei Lieder der Braut; Der Sandmann, Op. 79, No. 12; In's Freie, Op. 89, No. 5; Der Himmel hat eine Thräne geweint, Op. 37, No. 1; and Lust der Sturmnacht, Op. 35, No. 1*. These are all sung in German. The following are sung in English: *My Soul is Dark, Op. 25, No. 15; and Three Songs from Byron's Hebrew Melodies, Op. 95*.

The text of each song as Miss Thebom sings it is printed on the inside cover of the album.

Twentieth Century Minstrel. Richard Dyer-Bennett (vocal). 4-10" discs in album. Decca Set No. 573. \$3.94.

Richard Dyer-Bennett is certainly one of the most

popular minstrels of our day and the demand for his records among his numerous fans seems inexhaustible. Every new album is greeted with enthusiasm. The present one will not very likely be an exception, for the selections are choice, and Mr. Dyer-Bennett sings them in his inimitable style with his usual attractive guitar accompaniments—he even adds a whistling solo now and then.

The selections in this album are: *The Devil and the Farmer's Wife*; *The Old Maid*; *Early One Morning*; *Eggs and Marrowbone*; *Villikens and His Dinah*; *The Willow Tree*; *Swapping Song*; *Green-sleeves*; and *Oh Sally My Dear*.

Excerpts From "The Student Prince." Risë Stevens (mezzo-soprano) and Nelson Eddy (baritone) with Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Robert Armbruster. 3-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-724. \$3.75.

Miss Stevens and Mr. Eddy are heard to advantage in these lovely selections from Romberg's ever-popular operetta *The Student Prince*. This album will appeal to those who are interested in these fine artists and it will also appeal to that vast army of music lovers who never miss an opportunity of hearing this truly great musical play. Columbia has done a good job of recording and so this set of discs has much to recommend it.

The selections are: *Golden Days*; *Drinking Song*; *Deep In My Heart, Dear*; *Serenade*; *Just We Two*; and *Come Boys*.

Balfie Killarney. One side, and **Down by the Glenside** (trad.). Christopher Lynch (tenor) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Maximilian Pilzer. 1-10" disc (V-10-1396). \$1.

We cannot get very enthusiastic about this disc. Mr. Lynch's voice sounds a bit shrill to us; this is especially true on the *Killarney* side. Now that this artist has left Victor and is now recording for Columbia, it would seem to us that it might have been just as well if this record had never been released.

ORGAN



Bach: Prelude and Fugue in B minor. Fernando Germani playing the organ of Westminster Cathedral, London. 2-12" discs (V-C-3604 and V-C-3605). \$3.99.

Good Bach organ recordings may be divided into two categories: Biggs or Weinrich playing a baroque organ such as the Germanic Museum; and the large European church organs such as the one at hand. A majority of persons seem to prefer the large rich tones of the big church organs to the cold clear outlines of the baroque instruments. There is certainly an

inspiring and commanding nobility about the Westminster organ which always supplies the mind's eye with high-vaulted edifices and stained glass atmosphere. The impression is aided by the echo, which in this case is just right,—not too much to smear the music. Yes, the effect is wonderful, and those who love the organ will be deeply moved by these four sides. Just close your eyes, and you are in a great cathedral.

Germani's interpretations of Bach have not always met with the approval of organists. To one with an open mind his playing of the *Prelude and Fugue in B minor* is entirely convincing and is the well thought out work of an artist. His treatment of the prelude is on a huge scale with bold registration and a mighty climax. We felt his tempo was good, particularly the tempo he sets for the fugue. The fugue is clearly contrived with the subject always in evidence and against a fine build-up of great breadth and power.

Germani has also recorded the Franck *Chorale in A minor* which will be reviewed in a subsequent issue; but he did a great service by recording the great B minor Prelude and Fugue, for it had not previously been done. This work is among the last of Bach's, and is considered one of the very greatest. No one's collection of Bach will be complete, let alone representative, without this remarkable set, which will be played often with much satisfaction. The reproduction is lifelike and thrilling with a very wide range; surfaces are smooth. S.

Bach: Vivace (from 6th Trio Sonata). One side, and **Karg-Elert: Hymn to the Stars.** Walter Baker playing the organ at the Overbrook (Pa.) Presbyterian Church. 1-12" disc (Adelphia O-1002). \$3.

Another in Adelphia's series of outstanding organ recordings! The eminent organist Walter Baker presents impeccable performances of these two attractive selections. This disc is especially recommended for students of the organ and for those who are interested in high fidelity recordings of that majestic instrument. This recording is pressed on ruby vinylite.

VIOLIN



Nevin—arr. Kreisler: The Rosary. One side, and **Kreisler: Stars in My Eyes.** Fritz Kreisler (violin) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Donald Voorhees. 1-10" disc (V-10-1395). \$1.

Two sentimental vocal selections played on the violin—Mr. Kreisler makes them fairly drip. In *The Rosary*, he is aided and abetted by tubular chimes. If you have tears to shed, prepare to shed them now.

PIANO



Ravel: Pavane pour une Infante défunte. One side, and **Debussy: Réverie.** E. Robert Schmitz (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0066). \$1.25.

This disc is of particular importance because recordings of these selections are not readily available. While there are numerous recordings of Ravel's *Pavane pour une Infante défunte* in its arrangement for orchestra, we do not know of any in its original form for pianoforte. Gieseking made a record of Debussy's *Réverie*, but we have not seen a copy for a long time.

However, we need not worry about it, because Mr. Schmitz has made recordings of these pieces which should entirely satisfy even the most discerning music lovers. He has captured the mood of these selections and his impeccable technique makes his performances delightful musical experiences. The piano reproduction is excellent.

Khachaturian: Gayne Ballet Suite—Sabre Dance. One side, and **Khachaturian: Gayne Ballet Suite—Lullaby.** Oscar Levant (piano) with the Columbia Concert Orchestra conducted by Lou Bring. 1-10" disc (C-17521D). \$1.

Two selections from Khachaturian's popular ballet *Gayne* are played with fine showmanship by Oscar Levant, ably assisted by the Columbia Concert Orchestra. Mr. Levant has featured the Sabre Dance over the air on several recent occasions. It is just the sort of piece that catches on quickly and there have been numerous requests for a recording of it by Mr. Levant.

HARPSICHORD



Couperin: Le rossignol en amour. One side, and **Scarlatti: Sonata No. 9 in D Minor—"Pastorale."** Wanda Landowska (harpsichord). 1-10" disc (V-DA-1130). \$1.95.

A particularly charming little disc that has been listed in the foreign catalogs for a number of years but which has not been available in America since before the war—a few copies arrived in a recent shipment. Landowska at her best in two selections that most anyone may appreciate and enjoy!



DICTION

The Seven Riddles of Life. Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen (speaking). 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor set DM-1193. \$6.00.

Several years ago, the distinguished author, lecturer and professor of Philosophy at the Catholic

University of America (Washington, D. C.), the Right Rev. Msgr. Fulton J. Sheen made an album of recordings under the title "Prayer Time". It consisted of eight short sermons, and thousands of them were sold to Catholics and non-Catholics alike. In fact there has been a steady demand for that item ever since its release.

This month RCA Victor announces a second album by Monsignor Sheen. It contains a series of discourses entitled "The Seven Riddles of Life" and is based on The Seven Last Words of Christ.

As the following two paragraphs are entirely applicable to the present album we are re-printing them. They were the concluding paragraphs of our review of Monsignor Sheen's first album, "Prayer Time."

These recordings have caught, with photographic accuracy, the manner and spirit of Monsignor Sheen, and as one plays them in the quiet privacy of his own room, he has the feeling that the great preacher is speaking to him personally. There is nothing flamboyant about them. Their appeal is the simplicity and the sincerity of the speaker; he is always the pleader, never the bully.

At first glance one would think that this album would be of prime interest to Catholics only; but after listening to these records carefully, we rather feel that they will have a very definite appeal to all those many persons who believe that the only revolution that can save civilization is the revolution that reforms men, not a revolution that reforms institutions. That is Monsignor Sheen's firm belief and he has thousands of adherents within and without the Catholic Church. Many of us feel that a great spiritual revival is the only thing that can save the confused world in which we live, and Monsignor Sheen is a great leader in that direction. We who are Catholics, and we who are not, might be serving humanity better than we know by supporting all leaders who are headed toward that goal.

Mahatma Gandhi His Spiritual Message. M. K. Gandhi (speaking). 1-10" disc (C-17523D). \$1.

The voice of the late Mohandas K. Gandhi, leader of India's Hindu millions whose recent death is mourned by the world, can still be heard on a recording made in 1932 and re-issued by Columbia this week. Gandhi was living in England when the record was made, and accepted the offer to record his spiritual philosophies only with the stipulation that the royalties be donated to the Indian National Congress Party for use in the independence campaign. It is reported that Gandhi was paid a recording fee of \$200,000, which is believed to be the highest in the history of the recording industry. The record is entitled "The Justification of God."

In the precise English learned while he attended Oxford University, Gandhi discusses the fundamen-

tals of his spiritual concept on which he later based the "Satyagraha," or passive resistance, which was to become a credo for his followers.

This recording of Gandhi's, for many years a collector's item, has been given a new importance as a result of the untimely death of the great Indian leader.

MISCELLANEOUS



Prayers and Songs for the Sabbath. Rabbi Stephen S. Wise (reader) with Evelyn Sachs (contralto), Lawrence Davidson (baritone), Alexander Richardson (organ) and Free Synagogue Choir conducted by A. W. Binder. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor set MO-1192. \$4.75.

Regardless of one's belief, the hearing of these records cannot help being a rich religious experience. For those of the Jewish faith they will hold a much greater significance of course, but for Christians they should hold much beauty. Surely followers of Christ should not close their ears to the magnificence of the ceremonies that were the boyhood experiences of Jesus.

We presume that these discs contain excerpts from the Friday evening service, beginning with *The Kindling of the Sabbath Lights* and ending with *Kaddish* (Prayer for the Dead). Rabbi Wise conducts the service with great dignity and reverence, and the musical sections, under the direction of Professor Binder, are rendered in a most impressive manner. For those who have never attended a Jewish service, these recordings should be a great revelation—certainly a musical feast, if nothing else.

RCA Victor has achieved splendid recordings from the technical point of view, and the notes that accompany these discs aid greatly in their appreciation.

Classical Guitar Solos. Andrés Segovia (guitar). 4-10" discs in album. Decca Set No. 596. \$3.94.

As one would expect this new album by "the world's greatest guitarist," Andrés Segovia, is an artistic triumph. Those persons who feel that the guitar should take its rightful place with other instruments in the realm of classical music, will point to these recordings as ample evidence of that fact. Others will simply enjoy these recordings for the beauty of the music that they contain.

For this album, Mr. Segovia has chosen charming little selections from the works of: Domenico Scarlatti, Alessandro Scarlatti, Paganini, Rameau, Purcell, and Haydn. They have all been most faithfully recorded by Decca.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$9.75.

The Art of Judging Music. By Virgil Thomson. x+318+xviii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$4.25.

The Other Side of the Record. By Charles O'Connell. xi+332+xi pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.50.

Koussevitzky. By Moses Smith. 400 pp. Allen, Towne, and Heath, Inc. (New York). Price \$4.

Metropolitan Opera Annals: A Chronicle of Artists and Performances. Compiled by William H. Seltsam. Introduction by Edward Johnson. xvi+751 pp. The H. W. Wilson Co. (New York). Price \$7.

Records for Pleasure. By John Ball, Jr., ix+214 pp. Rutgers University Press (New Brunswick, N. J.). Price \$2.50.

How to Build a Record Library. By Paul Affelder. Foreword by Sigmund Spaeth. 256 pp. E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$3.50.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Asch. B—Brunswick. BL—Biblestone. BO—East. C—Columbia. CA—Co-Art. CE—Cetra. CL—Capitol. CON—Continental. CPS—Contemporary Poets Series. CRS—Collector's Record Shop. CT—Concertone. CU—Columbia University Book Store. D—Decca. DI—Disc. FRM—Friends of Recorded Music. G—General. GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America. GT—Gamut. HU—Harvard Film Service. HW—Hargail. IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club. KN—Keynote Recordings. L—London Gramophone. MU—Musicaert. NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists. NMR—New Music Recordings. O—Odeon. OK—Okkeh. OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre. PA—Parlophone. PAT—Pathé. PC—Parade's. PD—Polydor. RF—Radiofunken. S—Sonora. SL—Schirmer's Library. T—Telefunken. TA—Tone Art. TE—Technichord. TM—Timely. V—Victor. and VX—Vox.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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The Concert Companion. By Robert Bagar and Louis Biancolli with an introduction by Deems Taylor. xi + 868 pp. Whittlesey House (New York). Price \$7.50.

The title of this huge volume (over 800 pages) is a very apt one; certainly it should prove a suitable and rewarding companion to anyone who attends symphony concerts, or for that matter, anyone who listens to such broadcasts or recordings of orchestral music. If you would like to know something of the composer, and the background of the composition you are about to hear, this book is an ideal one for that purpose.

The authors have supplied the program notes for the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Society for the last six or seven years and their present volume is largely based on the annotations they have supplied for these concerts. Over five hundred compositions by one hundred and sixty-three composers are listed in the index. Among the composers will be found forty-three Americans. Practically every work that is presently in the repertoire of the leading symphony orchestras of this country will be found in this very inclusive book. The annotations are brief but contain a vast fund of useful and interesting information. There is always a word or two about the composer, and then some interesting facts about the composition, and finally a very short analysis of the music itself, written so that it is easily intelligible to the average layman. We do not know of any one volume that contains so much illuminating and lively information for the lover of orchestral music. When the review copy arrived, we picked it up and glanced through it, and before we knew it, we were reading page after page. This is not only a reference book; it is a book that one may easily read from cover to cover. All one needs is the time.

To produce these concert notes, the authors must have done a great amount of research, for we found much information that we had never seen in print before. This is particularly true in their annotations on works of living composers. The reader of *The Concert Companion* who does not add greatly to his knowledge is surely an erudite musical scholar of the first order.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues published during the last fifteen years are available. The price is 5c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 125 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

ORCHESTRA



Sibelius: En Saga, Op. 9. Five sides, and **Sibelius: Valse Triste.** London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Victor de Sabata. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-49. \$7.35.

By Sibelius *En Saga* is considered his first masterpiece, unlike anything he had previously composed, and a work of great power and originality. While their opinion and that of the writer differ as to its power and effectiveness, the fact remains that it is a colorful tone poem inspired by Finnish folklore and undoubtedly by the ancient sagas of the Kalevala, their national epic. Gloomy winter nights, legendary heroes, barbaric dances and the like may easily be imagined during the course of the music. The work was written at the request of Robert Kajanus, who was a constant champion of Sibelius in his homeland. Kajanus wanted something short and simple, which the Helsinki Conservatory Orchestra could perform, and which, also would tend to increase Sibelius' popularity. *En Saga* is comparatively short, but not exactly easy to understand; nevertheless it did become popular.

En Saga has been recorded previously only twice, once by Beecham (included in a Society Set, Vic. DM-658) and earlier by Goossens on Victor records no longer available. Goossens' version was cut to the

point where about only one half of the music was performed. The present set by Sabata is a remarkably fine interpretation, as most of Sabata's efforts have been. This man has a clear-cut and forceful way of doing things without being mannered or sentimental, yet capturing the spirit of the music admirably. He's a fine conductor, and we hope he visits our shores soon. Even his *Valse Triste* has simple dignity, and is effective without the usual slushiness attending this piece.

Decca's reproduction in this case is customarily spacious but a shade too full in the bass, for *En Saga* needs no emphasis on gloominess. Sibelius lovers who have missed *En Saga* will do well to patronize Sabata's fine exposition of the work. S.

Bizet: L'Arlésienne Suites Nos. 1 and 2—Excerpts.

Five sides, and **Puccini: Manon Lescaut—Intermezzo (Act III).** The National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sidney Beer. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-42. \$7.35.

The incidental music which Bizet wrote for Alphonse Daudet's play "L'Arlésienne" is in truth a minor masterpiece, despite the fact that performances of it these days are usually relegated to summer park concerts and "pops" programs. Together with *Carmen*, these works placed Bizet in the forefront of French composers.

L'Arlésienne Suites are generally strung together by the conductor performing them in a haphazard fashion. Actually *Suite No. 1* consists of the following: Prelude, Minuetto No. 1, Adagietto, Carillon and *Suite No. 2* contains: Pastorale, Intermezzo (La cuisine), Minuetto No. 2, and Farandole. The Intermezzo is the one from which the vocal arrangement has been called "Agnus Dei." Sidney Beer is no exception to the conductors who alter the suites. While Decca titles the album *Suites Nos. 1 and 2*, we appended the word "excerpts" for only the following four sections are included: Prelude, Minuetto No. 1, and Adagietto from the first suite and the Farandole from the second suite. With a spare side to go, certainly the Carillon could have been included, rather than the *Manon Lescaut* intermezzo.

With the explanations taken care of, we can go on to a valuation of the excerpts Beer offers. His workmanship is good and careful, and the music emerges clearly if not too forcefully. However, what Beer may lack in conductorial brilliance, *ffrr* reproduction rectifies with abundance. S.

Mozart: Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550. Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-727. \$4.75. (Also available in vinylite, MMV-727, \$7.00.)

One may wonder why Columbia chose to release a new version of the popular Mozart *Fortieth Sym-*

phony when they have an outstanding one in their catalog. Beecham and the London Philharmonic (MM-316) have long been acknowledged as the definitive performers of this work, and well they might be, for that set is one of the finest readings on records. However, it is obvious that Columbia is practically remaking their catalog with the American orchestras they have under contract. The public will benefit from the latest in reproduction, and can suffer only if the newer interpretations are inferior, or if Columbia fails to issue enough fresh material. Fresh material, as well as familiar fare, is forthcoming in abundance, and in this instance, the public is receiving an interpretation which we will go on record as saying is easily the equal of Beecham's.

Fritz Reiner and the Pittsburgh Orchestra play this work with the last degree of elegance, style, and precision, and at the same time provide a performance that is elastic and not brittle. The reproduction is excellent throughout in every respect. We might note that it was recorded at a lower than usual level, which necessitates somewhat more volume being used; however, a little more volume brings this set up to a point where it sounds ideal. The vinylite surfaces, Columbia's first, are black and not transparent. They are as quiet as any record surfaces we ever heard. From any angle this set is a splendid achievement. S.

Wagner: Parsifal—Prelude and Good Friday Spell. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1198. \$4.75.

As would be expected, the Boston Orchestra plays this music with a beautiful tonal quality and fine finish. Their end is technically excellent in every respect, and the reproduction is faithful and atmospheric. Koussevitzky's reading will doubtless satisfy a majority of the public, for it is sober, sensitive, and dutiful to the score. Parts of the Prelude and Good Friday Spell glow radiantly, while the climaxes are well adjusted in dynamics and balance.

For those who have access to either the Muck or Furtwangler recordings a comparison is obvious. Never has anyone equalled, let alone surpassed Furtwangler's recording of these two excerpts, and while Muck's recordings do not have the advantage of advanced recording techniques, they nevertheless convey his noble feeling for the music. We feel that it is one of the great tragedies of the post-war period in music that Victor has discontinued most Furtwangler recordings. Regardless of political implications, just or unjust, Furtwangler remains to this day one of the greatest conductors, and his several Victor recordings were superlative examples of his art. To say that the music is there but the feeling is not, in Koussevitzky's *Parsifal*, would be untrue; however, his insight does not match Furtwangler, and no one will deny it. This sublime

music is not to be classed with the average symphony or other orchestral work, for its unique form demands a most sympathetic and understanding conductor to fathom its mysteries. Those who feel this music deeply will sense what is missing here; but, we repeat, the majority will accept this new set for its intrinsic beauty and undoubtedly sincere approach. S.

Khachaturian: Gayne—Ballet Suite No. 2. The Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Efreim Kurtz. 2-12" discs in album, Columbia Set MX-292. \$3.50.

Khachaturian, at the present moment, may be in the "dog house" in the U.S.S.R.; but he is certainly very much in the limelight here in America. His music is played everywhere and the recordings of it have been on the best-sellers list for months. Recordings of his *Ballet Suite No. 1* from "Gayne" have sold like wildfire.

Columbia offers this month his *Ballet Suite No. 2* taken from the same work. It is in four sections: *Russian Dance*; *Introduction*; *Gayne's Adagio*; and *Fire*. The selections may not be quite as attractive as those of the first suite but they are surely interesting enough to insure wide popularity for this album.

Efreim Kurtz presents this stirring music in a most fascinating manner—it is right up his alley—and he makes the best of a grand opportunity. For something musically exciting, listen to his rendition of the last section entitled *Fire*. Columbia has accomplished a superb recording of this music.

Weber: Aufforderung zum Tanz, Op. 65. The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (C-12750D). \$1.25.

Weber's *Invitation to the Dance*, originally written for pianoforte has been arranged for orchestra by various other composers (Berlioz, Weingartner *et al*). The label of the present disc does not state which arrangement Ormandy used.

Numerous orchestral recordings of this tuneful work are available, many of them quite good. It is very likely that if you have one of these recordings in your library you will not wish to substitute the present version for it. However, if you do not, and would like to add this selection to your collection, it would be well to consider this most recent recording. It is surely just as good as any, and possibly a shade better than most because of the excellent modern Columbia reproduction.

Glinka: Russlan and Ludmilla—Overture. The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-10" disc (C-19010D). \$1.

Thus we have another recording of this selection, but we doubt whether it will have a very wide

appeal. It is on two sides of a ten-inch record—most persons like such pieces on one side of a twelve-inch disc because the majority of users have automatic instruments. Ormandy gives a nice performance and the reproduction is satisfactory but we don't believe that the handicap mentioned above can be very easily overcome.

Saint-Saens: Le Rouet d'Omphale, Op. 31. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (V-12-0152). \$1.25.

Numerous recordings have been made of Saint-Saens's popular symphonic poem *Omphale's Spinning Wheel*, but we doubt if any of them is quite as satisfactory as Sir Thomas's version, which is contained on the present disc. Beecham is a meticulous conductor, and such dainty music is his forte. Fine reproduction is an added feature of this very attractive disc.

Anderson: Chicken Reel. One side, and **Anderson: Fiddle Faddle.** Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-10" disc (V-10-1397). \$1.

If you can keep your feet still when you hear these famous minstrel show tunes, you'll probably find that your legs have gone to sleep. We don't know why anyone would want such a record unless he wished to play it for grand-pop who liked music with some "zip" to it.

Mozart: Minuet (K. 409). One side, and **Schubert: Rosamunde—Ballet Music.** The Cleveland Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. 1-12" disc (C-12749D). \$1.25.

Leinsdorf and the Cleveland Orchestra make this charming music sound mighty attractive on the present disc. Most anyone can enjoy these tuneful selections—lovely dinner music in the refined manner. Reproduction—excellent.

Polla (arr. Gould): Dancing Tambourine. One side, and **Jessel (arr. Gould): Parade of the Wooden Soldiers.** The Robin Hood Dell Orchestra of Philadelphia conducted by Morton Gould. 1-12" disc (C-12748D). \$1.25.

Pleasing arrangements by Morton Gould and played under his direction by the very excellent Robin Hood Dell Orchestra—attractive music that most anyone can enjoy. Well recorded.

Coates: Dancing Nights Valse. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eric Coates. 1-10" disc (C-17514D). \$1.

The music of England's most famous composer of light tuneful music, Eric Coates, is becoming more and more popular in the United States. This vogue for Mr. Coates' music has been largely brought

about by the re-pressing of records of his music by American publishers. The splendid recording of this sparkling waltz on the present disc should add to the composer's fame on this side of the Atlantic.

CONCERTO



Mozart: Concerto for Flute and Harp in C Major, K. 299. Lili Laskine (harp) and René Le Roy (flute) with Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 3-12" discs in album (V-DB-9159 to V-DB-9161) (automatic sequence). \$7.88.

Mozart wrote this work in Paris in 1778 for the use of the Duke de Guines and his daughter. The Duke was an admirable flautist, as Mozart himself testified, and his daughter was an equally accomplished harpist. Mozart, brought to the attention of the Duke by Grimm, was commissioned to write a flute and harp concerto; and though, according to Jahn, these instruments were by no means Mozart's favorites, "the fact did not prevent his accomplishing his task to the satisfaction of the Duke."

Perhaps some may feel that the Duke was rather easily satisfied because the work is certainly not one of Mozart's best. It has, it is true, many lovely moments, but much of it is rather routine and without the sparkle for which the composer is noted.

If you are interested, you will find the present performance just about as fine a one as could be wished for. The soloists are superb; and with the meticulous direction of Sir Thomas Beecham, who is our favorite conductor of Mozart, this recording presents the music in the most attractive manner possible. Many years ago, the present harpist, Lili Laskine, made a recording of this work with Marcel Moyse (flute) and an orchestra directed by Piero Coppola. R.

Mendelssohn: Concerto in E minor, Op. 64. Mischa Elman (violin) with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Désiré Defauw. Seven sides, and **Mendelssohn: Song Without Words, Op. 62, No. 1** ("May Breezes"). Mischa Elman (violin) with piano accompaniment by Wolfgang Rosé. 4-12" discs in album, RCA Victor Set DM-1196. \$6.

We can appreciate Victor's desire to issue a new recording of the Mendelssohn *Violin Concerto*, always a best seller in its class; but we cannot understand their reason for permitting this set to represent their latest offering of such well known and familiar fare. Theoretically Elman may be a natural choice, for his ravishing tone used to find an agreeable outlet in this work. However, at this date his technical ability is not secure enough, and his interpretation has taken on extreme exaggerations which do much malice to the music. This recording

seems to us the least desirable one available, certainly not as poetic as the early Kreisler (DM-277) nor as agile as the Menuhin (DM-531) both of which are still in the Victor catalog. The best all around performances are the Milstein (Col. MM-577) and the Ida Haendel (EDA-23). Milstein is glowing and energetic while Miss Haendel is spacious and poetic, both excellent but in a different way.

The insecurity of Elman's fiddling in many of the difficult passages is surprising as well as annoying. But to us, the unreasonable interpretive excesses often spoiled the work. Such obvious *rubati* and swollen retards and distortions of phrases are unnecessary, and most violinists today do not indulge in them in this work. Elman fares best in the second movement *Andante*, where the tone is often rich and persuasive, although the whole movement is cast in too loose and flabby a manner. Most musicians and critics prefer the old Szigeti and Beecham set (Col. MM-190), which to the interested reader offers an unbelievable comparison to this Elman set. Szigeti has a sophisticated and mature approach that nearly transcends the music itself, although his tone is not too broad, and the reproduction is dated. You may like this new set, but we urge you to compare it to some others before deciding. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Stravinsky: L'Histoire du Soldat. Six sides, and **Stravinsky: Octet for Wind Instruments.** Members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leonard Bernstein. 5-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1197. \$7.25.

L'Histoire du Soldat, or "The Soldier's Tale," is based on an ancient Russian fairy tale of a soldier and his violin and the devil. It is a work which is read, played, and danced, the three elements taking turns as soloists and ensemble. The music itself consists of a series of pieces in the manner of a suite, which are played either as an accompaniment to the recitation or without it. Although scored for only seven instruments, clarinet, bassoon, trumpet, trombone, violin, double bass, and percussion, the entire range of woodwind, brass, and strings is represented. The various percussion effects employed are indeed elaborate, and add much color to the score, which abounds in surly, sarcastic, and cynical moments. Anyone who reads an outline of the action, follows the record labels, and can appreciate economy of means, should easily be impressed with *The Soldier's Tale*, for Stravinsky is eloquent and effective (and acrid).

The *Octet for Wind Instruments* provides a distinct contrast to its companion in this album. The Octet is a bright and sprightly affair in three movements: *sinfonia*, theme and variations, and *finale*. Its humor is less acid and more good natured than

The Soldier's Tale. The Octet is scored for flute, clarinet, two bassoons, two trombones, and two trumpets, and is absolute music in a classical style. If you have any fondness for Stravinsky and smaller ensembles, you will find this quite enjoyable.

The present album was recorded at Tanglewood last summer, and is a splendid accomplishment from every angle. One previous recording of each of these works was made in Paris some years ago, each of which is currently available (Col. MM-184 and MX-25, respectively); and although they are good performances, they do not match the present set's reproduction. S.

Brahms: String Quartet No. 3 in B flat major, Op. 67. Guilet String Quartet. 4-12" discs in album. Vox Set No. 208. \$6.00.

Lovers and students of chamber music will doubtless be delighted to learn that there has been made a recording of the third and last of Brahms's string quartets; there are several recorded versions of the first two. They will also be pleased to know that it has been made by such a distinguished group of players as the Guilet String Quartet, of whom the eminent critic, Virgil Thomson, after their debut at Town Hall (New York), said, "one of the great string quartets of our century. The way they play is the way the great quartets have always played. No other quartet has either the homogeneity of tone or brightness of color the Guilets have—The Guilets have everything!"

Musicologists are not in agreement about the quality of Brahms's *Quartet No. 3 in B flat major*, whom the composer dedicated to his Utrecht friend, Professor Engelmann, although, of the three works in this form, it is probably the most popular with the musical public. An absolute musician may pick it apart technically, but its dainty rhythms and its passionately lyrical quality are bound to please most listeners. The solo viola against a background of muted strings in the third movement, and the tuneful variations that lead up to the finale of the last movement, are always attended with the rapt enjoyment of the audience.

Vox has accomplished a faithful reproduction, and this album is an important addition to the repertoire of recorded music.

Brahms: Sonata No. 3 in D Minor for Violin and Piano, Op. 108. Isaac Stern (violin) and Alexander Zakin (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-730. \$4.75.

There have been several previous recordings of this, the last and most difficult of Brahms's three sonatas for violin and piano. The most famous one is probably the one made by Szigeti and Petri in 1938, also for Columbia. It is very likely that that is the one that will be compared with the present version and it is our opinion that it will resolve

itself into a matter of personal preference.

It has been said that this work holds little for the casual listener—that it is difficult to listen to. It is hard to place any credit in this statement after hearing a performance of it by either Szigeti and Petri or Stern and Zakin. Certainly we did not find it a task in either instance—we enjoyed it from the first note to the last. We are sure that discerning lovers of chamber music will wish to make its acquaintance if they do not already have a recording of it in their libraries.



OPERA

Menotti: "The Medium" and "The Telephone" (complete operas). (Sung in English). Evelyn Keller, Marie Powers, Beverly Dame, Frank Rogier, Catherine Mastice, and orchestra conducted by Emanuel Balaban. 10-12" discs in two volumes. Columbia Set MM-726. \$15.00.

Gian-Carlo Menotti's double-bill comes through beautifully as a recorded performance. All those who heard these two widely contrasting operas, when they enjoyed a long Broadway sojourn, will recognize their original reactions to the comedy of *The Telephone* and the lurid drama of *The Medium*, once again.

Columbia, quite truthfully and with pardonable pride, announces that these are the first American operas ever to be recorded in their entirety. When Columbia's complete *Boheme* appears next month, the company can boast not only of the Puccini opera, but also of these two American works, plus *Hansel and Gretel*, as an answer to its year-old assertion that it would record complete operas. Which brings us to the rather sour conclusion that RCA Victor's highly-publicized and flashy promises along the same lines are apparently written on the changing sands!

To go back to the present sets, here are these two well constructed operas, presented with their original Broadway casts and orchestra. The music comes through well, revealing Menotti as a highly finished craftsman with a keen sense of theatrical values. Whether this is lasting music or not is a matter which only time can tell. At present it seems more likely that it is the exceedingly able work of a man who thoroughly understands what he is about and what he wants. *The Island God* still seems to this writer the finest music Menotti has written for any of his five operas—this, in spite of its lack of popularity.

However, there was no question ever about the popularity of *The Medium* and the *The Telephone*; they were immediate and astounding hits. Toscanini, himself, is said to have gone three times during their New York engagement.

The Telephone has to rely tremendously, for a successful performance, on the diction of the two characters who sing it—a girl who is addicted to

the great American pastime (the phone), and her frantic beau who can only bring matters to a head by leaving Lucy's apartment and approaching her through her favorite channel. Every word sung by Marilyn Cottlow (Lucy) and Frank Rogier (Ben) comes over as though they were actually present. Miss Cottlow's part is musically anything but easy and she sings it brilliantly.

The same things are true of *The Medium*, in which the turgid drama of a fake spiritualist caught in the web of her own deceptions is brought through the wax record surfaces with an impact worthy of the actual theater.

Marie Powers, who scored such a rousing success as Madam Flora in New York, again brings her hefty voice and baroque sense of melodrama to the recorded performance. Incidentally, Miss Powers may be remembered as a powerfully-voiced Amneris, Laura and Azucena with the Philadelphia-La Scala Opera Company, some seasons ago, when she sang under the name of Maria Crescentini.

Evelyn Keller's full lyric soprano ably companions Miss Powers' fine voice, as she sings the demanding role of Madam Flora's assistant, Monica. Her ballad *O black Swan, where o where has my Lover gone?* is an admirable piece of sustained singing, sharing honors with Miss Powers' *Afraid, am I afraid?*

Beverly Dame, Frank Rogier and Catherine Mastice round out this excellent original cast with distinction.

Sound effects add to the atmosphere, and the reproduction is A-1 in a recording that is indeed an historical landmark in the realm of phonographic art.

MAX DE SCHAUSENSEE.

Mozart Album. Italo Tajo (bass) with The Symphony Orchestra of the Radio Italiana conducted by Mario Rossi. 3-12" discs in album. Cetra Set 104. \$6.52.

There seems to have been, for some time, an impression in this country that Italian singers (with the exception of Ezio Pinza) are not good Mozart singers. Any such feeling should be quickly dispelled by this supremely well sung selection of Mozart concert and incidental arias, which are all quite unfamiliar, by Italo Tajo. Mr. Tajo, whom you may remember as the amusing and capital *Don Basilio* in the recent movie version of Rossini's *Barber of Seville*, is an Italian-born singer who has had the greater part of his career in his native land.

These six arias, only one of which is to be found elsewhere on records, were written by Mozart either for concert use, or for interpolation in the operas of other composers—Paisiello, Anfossi and the playwright, Metastasio.

There is plenty of contrast, from the airy and delightful *Un bacio di mano* to the dramatic *Così*

dunque tradisci—a remarkable buffo aria from Mozart's own *Così Fan Tutte*, which is generally omitted from performances of this opera. The aria *Per questa bella mano* has an unusual double-bass obbligato. Here you will find delightful and unusual musical fare.

Mr. Tajo, while not possessing the vocal splendor of a Pinza, nevertheless reveals himself as a most delightfully cultivated singer. His diction is exemplary and the freedom and utter naturalness of his vocal emission permits him to indulge in many charming effects of delicate tone coloring, rare in a bass singer. Only the artist's lowest tones, which seem a little "dead," can arouse any criticism.

Recording is better than most Cetra releases and the orchestral balance is admirable. Surfaces are the best encountered on Cetra so far. We recommend this altogether unusual album as a charming experience, a "must" for lovers of Mozart's music sung as it should be.

Mr. Tajo has selected for this album the following Mozart arias: *Mentre ti lascio, o figlia* (K.513), *Un bacio di mano* (K.541), *Per questa bella mano* (K.612), *Così dunque tradisci* (K.432), *Rivolgete a lui lo sguardo* (K.584), and *Alcandro, lo confesso* (K.512).

MAX DE SCHAUSENSEE.

Mozart: Don Giovanni—Il mio tesoro (Act II). One side, and **Donizetti: Figlia del Reggimento**—Per viver vicino a maria (Act II). (Sung in Italian). John McCormack (tenor) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1015). \$2.50.

Verdi: I Lombardi—Polonaise (Act IV). One side, and **Gounod: Faust**—Air des bijoux (Act III). (Sung in French). Blanche Arral (soprano) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1016). \$2.50.

Meyerbeer: L'Africana—Adamastor, re dell' onde profonde (Act III). One side, and **Thomas: Hamlet**—Brindisi: O vin, discaccia la tristezza (Act II). (Sung in Italian). G. Mario Sammarco (baritone) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1018). \$2.50.

Verdi: Rigoletto—Quartet: Bella figlia dell' amore (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Luisa Tetrazzini (soprano), Josephine Jacoby (contralto), Enrico Caruso (tenor), and Pasquale Amato (baritone), with orchestra. One side, and **Gounod: Faust**—Trio: Alerte! Alerte! (Act V). (Sung in Italian). Nellie Melba (soprano), John McCormack (tenor), and G. Mario Sammarco (baritone) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1019). \$2.50.

Verdi: La Traviata—Dite alla giovine (Act II). One side, and **Verdi: La Traviata**—Imponetel (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Frieda Hempel (soprano) and Pasquale Amato (baritone) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1020). \$2.50.

The fourth issue of the heritage series brings us

two pieces of concerted music; a *scena* between two celebrated artists, and selections by a famous tenor, a baritone and a lesser known soprano.

Luisa Tetrazzini (1871-1940), Josephine Jacoby, Enrico Caruso (1873-1921) and Pasquale Amato (1873-1942) offer the *Rigoletto* Quartet, which they recorded on February 13, 1912, and which is an excellent example of the vocal art of that period. The four voices are excellently balanced with Tetrazzini quite holding her own in the higher ranges, and Caruso dispensing vocal velvet with his Neapolitan generosity.

On the reverse, Nellie Melba (1859-1931), John McCormack (1884-1945), and Mario Sammarco (1873-1930) sing the final Trio from *Faust*. This is Melba's show, the crystalline purity of her penetrating tones, quite dominating her partners in a scene for which she was justly celebrated.

Frieda Hempel (1884-) and Pasquale Amato present the *scena: Die alla giovine and Imponete*; from *La Traviata*. The recording (made in 1914) might have been a bit more forward (particularly in the case of Amato), but it is a wonderfully clean bit of singing on the part of these artists, who, between 1911 and 1916, were often heard in these roles at the Metropolitan—many times together.

John McCormack is now represented on unbreakable Vinylite by his finest record—*Il mio tesoro* from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. Selected by Lilli Lehmann to sing Don Ottavio at the great Mozart Festival at Salzburg of 1914 (he was subsequently prevented by the outbreak of war), McCormack was the ideal Mozart tenor. It is highly probable that for elegance of style, wonderful breath-control and perfection of florid singing, *Il mio tesoro*, has never been so well sung. On the reverse the great Irish tenor sings an aria from one of his early successes, Donizetti's *Figlia del Reggimento*. Recorded in March 1910, this affords a glimpse of the career-building days of this beloved singer.

Mario Sammarco was one of the best Italian baritones of his period, an ornament of La Scala and a creator of many roles. Possessor of an unusually resonant tone and commanding style, Sammarco is here presented in the showy *Drinking Song* from Thomas' *Hamlet* and Nelsusko's aria, *Adamastor, re dell' onde' profonde* from Meyerbeer's *L'Africana*. Both sides are fine examples of one of the outstanding baritones of the first decade of the century.

Blanche Arral (1864-1945), a Belgian soprano who made a fine European career, has the distinction of having been in the original cast of Massenet's *Manon* when it was first presented in January 1884 at the Paris Opera-Comique. Aged 19, Mme. Arral appeared under her own name of Clara Lardinois as the servant whose lines are merely spoken. She sang plenty later on! The Jewel Song from *Faust* is here the gayest on records—a singularly

happy performance, while on the reverse Mme. Arral offers a brilliant and rare *Polonaise* from Verdi's early opera *I Lombardi*. The singer's voice is very clearly recorded. MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Wagner: Die Walkure—Wotan's Abscheid and Feuerzauber (Act III, Scene 3). (Sung in German). Paul Schoeffler (bass-baritone) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Karl Rankl. 2-12" discs in album. English Decca Set EDA-46. \$5.25.

It is interesting to hear what *ffrr* technique does to Wotan's great scene of farewell at the close of *Die Walkure*. Probably never before has this music been recorded so vividly. Even the little sparks and glints of fire in the closing pages of the *Fire Music* seem to fly upwards before you.

This recording was sorely needed, as the Schorr *Farewell* has been long discontinued, and the only available one is the now outmoded version by Tibbett, made many years ago with Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra. There is, of course, the one in the complete Act III by Columbia, but we are speaking of this scene as an entity in itself.

Paul Schoeffler, a bass-baritone of fine traditions but of not outstanding vocal endowments, is the soloist with the London Symphony, under the direction of Karl Rankl. Mr. Schoeffler's voice seems a bit light at the opening outburst and subsequent declamatory measures. It is a voice which tends towards a strong lower register and which thins out as it ascends the scale. The singer has a deep feeling for text and vocal line. The quality of his tone is hardly beautiful, but it is firm.

The orchestral portion of this great scene—a factor of major importance—comes through well, and Herr Rankl knows what he is about. Reproduction, as already hinted above, is the best yet achieved in this music. MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Puccini: La Boheme—Musetta's Waltz Song (Act II). One side, and Puccini: Gianni Schicchi—O mio babbino caro (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Bidu Sayao (soprano) with Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Pietro Cimara. 1-10" disc (C-17515D). \$1.

Gluck: Orfeo ed Euridice—Che faro senza Euridice (Act III). (Sung in Italian). One side, and Thomas: Mignon—Rondo-Gavotte: Me voici dans son boudoir (Act II). (Sung in French). Nan Merriman (mezzo-soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 1-12" disc (V-12-0067). \$1.25.

This month Bidu Sayao offers a charming coupling of Puccini arias—*O mio babbino caro* from *Gianni Schicchi* and *Musetta's Valse* from *La Boheme*. Curiously enough, there has not been a

recording of Musetta's thrice popular and familiar aria since the early electric version by Lucrezia Bori. Mme. Sayao sings it easily and with much grace and intention, the last high note emerging with fine brilliance. This is a relief after the shrill account one generally has to listen to from the average Musetta.

The *Gianni Schicchi* excerpt is one of Puccini's well-known moments that charm. The Brazilian soprano accomplishes it with her delightful fluency and finely etched tone, though her singing is perhaps less affecting than what one hears in the recent recording by Licia Albanese of this lovely aria.

Nan Merriman offers additions to her quickly growing list with the *Gavotte* from *Mignon*, and *Che faro senza Euridice?* from Gluck's *Orfeo*. The Thomas music seems to suit Miss Merriman's bright mezzo-soprano better than the classic contours of Gluck's music. For one used to the wonderful record of this latter aria by Alice Raveau, Miss Merriman's singing will undoubtedly sound superficial—almost casual.

Recording of both singers is well up to present-day standards. D.

Donizetti: Don Pasquale—So anch' io la virtù magica (Act I). One side, and **Verdi: Rigoletto**: Caro nome (Act I). (Sung in German). Erna Sack (soprano) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (RF-R-70081). \$2.63.

Only occasionally do we have a disc containing operatic selections by the brilliant German coloratura, Erna Sack. Her many admirers in this country will surely be delighted with this one. It is enough merely to list it.



VOCAL

"I Believe" (Song Collection). Emma Schaver (soprano), with Symphonic Orchestra and Choir conducted by George Sebastian. 3-12" discs in album. Vox set 635. \$4.75.

From the notes that accompany this album we learn that Miss Schaver, an eminent interpreter of Jewish folk music, embarked on a mission as a cultural delegate to the Displaced Persons camps of Europe. While traveling from camp to camp and singing to the DP's the nostalgic themes of their old homes, her sensitive ear caught the musical line of a number of partisan or folk songs, the authors of which for the most part are unknown. Six of these songs that have received full symphonic orchestration make up the present album. The *Jugend Hymn* was selected by Miss Schaver from a collection of Ghetto songs compiled by the DP's themselves. It more poignantly than others expresses the mood of the Ghetto. Most haunting of all is *Ani Maamin* (I Believe). The last of the thirteen articles

of faith codified by Moses Maimonides, it expresses the Jewish will to survival.

Miss Schaver is an able artist with a wide background of concert experience and she presents the unusual selections on these discs in a sympathetic and often quite dramatic manner. She has excellent support from a fine chorus and a suitable orchestra. The reproduction is highly satisfactory.

The selections in this album are: *Kaddisch*; *Partisan Song*; *Es Brennt*; *Eins, Zwei, Drei*; *Jugend Hymn*; and *Ani Maamin*. The English texts of these songs are printed on the inside of the back cover.

Look, Ma, I'm Dancin'!—Selections. Members of the Original Cast with chorus and orchestra under the direction of Pembroke Davenport. 4-10" discs in album. Decca Set DA-637. \$3.94.

"Look, Ma, I'm Dancin'!" played Philadelphia on its way to Broadway with considerable success, and now that it is settled down in New York it seems to be one of the real hits of the season just about to close.

Decca has secured the services of Nancy Walker and the other members of the original cast for this recording, and they present the principal selections from the show in a truly theatrical atmosphere with the chorus and orchestra under the direction of Pembroke Davenport. It's the highlights of the show on records. If you have seen the show and liked it, you'll think that this is a grand album—if you haven't, better lend an ear before you part with your cash for this one. The music is lively and loud, and if you can supply the action in your mind's eye, you'll probably get a big kick from these discs. Without your imagination, the lyrics and music will hardly hold your interest. As we just mentioned it is lively and loud but we can't add anything to that but "period."

The selections in this album are: *Gotta Dance*; *Shauny O'Shay*; *I'm the First Girl*; *If You'll Be Mine*; *I'm Not So Bright*; *Little Boy Blues*; *I'm Tired of Texas*; and *Tiny Room*.

A Robeson Recital of Popular Favorites. Paul Robeson (baritone) with Columbia Concert Orchestra conducted by Emanuel Balaban. 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-732. \$4.90.

Paul Robeson has chosen for this album a number of songs that he has sung hundreds of times with great success—many of them he has rather made his own. He handles them all with loving care and Columbia has seen to it that they were all meticulously recorded. If you are a Robeson fan, this collection will be at the top of your buying list.

The selections are: *Ol' Man River*; *It Ain't Necessarily So*; *I Still Suits Me*; *Sylvia*; *Ma Curly-Headed Baby*; *Wagon Wheels*; *Mah Lindy Lou*; and *The House I Live In*.

Alabiev: Russian Nightingale Song. One side, and **Adam: Variation on a Mozart theme.** Erna Sack (soprano) with Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by W. Csernik. 1-12" disc (RF-R-70080). \$2.63.

Millocker: Gasparone—Canzonetta: Komm, mia bella. One side, and **Dell' Acqua: Villanelle.** Erna Sack (soprano) and orchestra. 1-10" disc (RF-R-8402). \$1.32.

Melicher-Baumann: Nanon—So werliebt wie heut' war ich nie. One side, and **Melicher-Baumann: Nun—Nun ist das Glueck gegangen.** Erna Sack (soprano) and orchestra. 1-10" disc (RF-R-8403). \$1.32.

Just as we were about to go to press, this group of recordings by the brilliant German coloratura arrived in the studio. As there is a large demand for records by this great artist, we will not hold them for detailed reviews. In fact, we doubt if there is much to say regarding these selections except that they cover a wide field and all give Miss Sack ample opportunities to display the great art that is hers. These discs have very likely been dubbed from originals that have been brought over from Europe. If that is so, the dubbing has been quite successfully accomplished. Of course, no dubbing is equal to an original pressing. In listening to these records, one must bear that fact in mind.

Christian Science Hymns. The Christian Science WNBC Radio Program Mixed Quartet accompanied on the Master Cathedral Organ. 4-10" discs in album. Bibletone Set CS. \$4.73.

This album contains recordings of a series of hymns by Mary Baker Eddy and are published "By Permission of The Trustees Under The Will of Mary Baker Eddy." It would seem that these are authentic recordings which will be acceptable to all Christian Scientists. The text of each hymn will be found on the inside cover of the album.

They have been well recorded and as there has been an urgent demand for such recordings, we rather feel that this album will fill a long-felt need. The hymns are: *Shepherd, Show Me How to Go; O Gentle Presence; Blest Christmas Morn; O'er Waiting Harpstrings of the Mind; Brood O'er Us With Thy Sheltering Wing; Saw Ye My Saviour; and It Matters Not What Be Thy Lot.*

Couperin: Leçons de Ténèbres, No. 2. Lise Daniels (soprano) with Maurice Duruflé (organ) and Fernand Lemaire (violoncello). 2-10" discs (OL-43 and OL-47). \$3.20.

This unusual item was selected from the L'Oiseau-Lyre catalog, which we mentioned editorially in our December 1947 issue. It is from the works of the great French composer François Couperin (1668-1733) to whose name was added "le Grand." He, it

was, who set the style for the elegant and graceful music that was to become known as typically French. Miss Daniels has a clear, almost bird-like, soprano voice that is perfectly suited for the difficult work that she sings on these discs. The recording has been most faithfully accomplished.

Kern: Why Do I Love You (from "Showboat"). One side, and **Coward: I'll See You Again** (from "Bittersweet"). Dorothy Kirsten (soprano) and Robert Merrill (baritone) with Russ Case and his orchestra. 1-10" disc (V-10-1398). \$1.

Miss Kirsten and Mr. Merrill have left all traces of the Metropolitan Opera House behind them and have moved over to the Gay White Way for these recordings; and they have accomplished grand renditions of these very popular light comedy selections. If you are in the mood for such music, you find this disc "tops." Reproduction—splendid.

Schubert—arr. Black: Ave Maria. One side, and **Schubert—arr. Black: Ständchen.** (Sung in English). James Melton (tenor) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frank Black. 1-12" disc (V-12-0153). \$1.25.

Dr. Black has made very attractive arrangements of Schubert's ever-popular *Ave Maria* and *Serenade*, and James Melton sings them in a manner that is bound to please his vast host of admirers. RCA Victor has recorded them splendidly.

Inside U. S. A. Beatrice Lillie, Jack Haley, Perry Como, Billy Williams and chorus, with orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor set K-14. \$4.

Inside U. S. A. Buddy Clark, Pearl Bailey, and orchestra conducted by Mitchell Ayres. 3-10" discs in album. Columbia Set C-162. \$3.15.

"Inside U. S. A.," the big musical show starring Beatrice Lillie and Jack Haley, has got more advance publicity than any other show in our memory. It opened in Philadelphia a few days ago and should arrive on Broadway within the next couple of weeks. It had rave reviews in the Quaker City and tickets are at a premium. Both Victor and Columbia realizing its importance have each made available an album of the hit tunes; thus, those going to the opening night on Broadway may very possibly be humming these tunes as they enter the theatre. That would be quite an novelty, wouldn't it?

The Victor album contains the following selections: *Haunted Heart; Inside U. S. A.; At the Mardi Gras; Come, Ob Come; Rhode Island is Famous for You; First Prize at the Fair; My Gal is Mine Once More; and Atlanta.*

The Columbia Album contains: *Haunted Heart; My Gal is Mine Once More; Rhode Island is Famous for You; First Prize at the Fair; Blue Grass; and Protect Me.*

CHORAL



Abide with Me ("Eventide"). **Forth in Thy Name** ("Song 34"). Choir of the Royal School of Church Music directed by Sir Sidney H. Nicholson with organ accompaniment. 1-12" disc (RSCM-ROX 200). \$2.10.

Christ Is Made ("Westminster Abbey"). **To Thee, Our God, We Fly** (Croft's 148th). Choir of the Royal School of Church Music directed by Sir Sidney H. Nicholson with organ accompaniment. 1-12" disc (RSCM-ROX 199). \$2.10.

In view of the fact that so many persons who are interested in religious recordings have found the records made by the Royal School of Church Music of especial value, we are listing two more of them that have not previously been brought to the attention of our readers. These hymns are beautifully sung by an excellent choir of men and boys with fine organ accompaniments. They are, of course, in the tradition of the English Church, and were recorded in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, London.

We will be pleased to send to any of our readers who request it a complete list of these recordings. Just drop a card to the publishers of this bulletin asking for a list of The Royal School of Church Music Records.

PIANO



Paganini—arr. Liszt: **La Campanella**. One side, and **Bach: Two Chloral Preludes** (Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring; Rejoice, Beloved Christians). The First Piano Quartet. 1-12" disc (V-12-0206). \$1.25.

Paderewski: Minuet in G, Op. 14, No. 1. One side, and **Rachmaninoff: Prelude in C sharp minor, Op. 3, No. 2**. The First Piano Quartet. 1-12" disc (V-12-0207). \$1.25.

The previous recordings of The First Piano Quartet have met with considerable public acceptance. This is an unique group of artists and their performances are marked with good taste and unusual skill. This month they offer several pieces that are well-known in the literature for the pianoforte including Rachmaninoff's famous *Prelude in C sharp minor*. Their arrangements of the two Bach choral preludes is quite interesting. Piano reproduction—excellent.

Mompou: Jeunes filles au jardin (from "Scènes d'Enfants"). One side, and **Philipp: Feux-Follets**. Guiomar Novaës (piano). 1-10" disc (C-17522D). \$1.

Two modern French pieces exquisitely played by the brilliant Brazilian pianist, Guiomar Novaës.

Feux-Follets was composed by Miss Novaës' distinguished teacher, Isidore Philipp. The Mompou selection, in the style of Debussy, is just the sort of piece that is likely to take with the average cultivated listener. It might make this disc quite a big seller. Reproduction—excellent.

Scarlatti: Sonata in C minor. One side, and **Scarlatti: Sonatina in D minor, L. 413**. Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli (piano). 1-10" disc (V-DA-5380). \$1.95.

Here is as lovely a piano record as one will find in many a long day. It contains two dainty little pieces by Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757) exquisitely played by the distinguished Italian pianist Michelangeli. Reproduction—excellent.

Weber: Aufforderung zum Tanz, Op. 65. Artur Schnabel (piano). 1-12" disc (V-DB-6491). \$2.63.

In this recording Artur Schnabel is the prim, strict dancing master; everything is according to note, and Mr. Schnabel goes trippingly and deftly through this gay music without cracking a smile. It is fascinating but not very romantic. The piano reproduction is outstanding.

Lecuona-Nash: Malagueña (From Suite "Andalucía"). One side, and **De Falla**—arr. Kovacs: **Spanish Dance No. 1** (From "La Vida Breve"). Bartlett and Robertson (duo-pianists). 1-10" disc (C-17516D). \$1.

Sparkling music in the Spanish manner played with skill and excellent taste by the famous two-piano team of Mr. and Mrs. Robertson—beautifully recorded by Columbia.

ORGAN



Organ Music of Bach, Prelude and Fugue in E flat ("St. Anne"), Fugue in D minor ("The Giant"). Fantasia and Fugue in G minor ("The Great"), Toccata in F. E. Power Biggs playing the organ in St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University, New York. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-728. \$7.25.

A glance at the titles of the contents of this album will reveal that this is one of the outstanding Bach albums. Good modern recordings of all these works were needed very much. Biggs, now recording for Columbia, has chosen a high powered assortment for his first set. Actually, they should not all be played at one sitting, for each work is large-scaled and is accordingly registered heavily, resulting in too much of a good thing for continuous hearing.

The first four sides are devoted to the "St. Anne" Prelude and Fugue. The fugue has been nicknamed "St. Anne" because the subject coincides note for note with the first line of the hymn tune "O God,

Our Help in Ages Past" which tune is called "St. Anne." It is also known as the "Triple Fugue." Biggs previously recorded it for Technichord, although the present version is superior in many respects. The "Giant" *Fugue in D minor* is on the chorale "We all believe in one true God," familiar to many in the Stokowski transcription (V-7089); it occupies the fifth side of this set. This half of the set makes a nice program in itself. The balance of the album rises to even greater heights, starting with the "Great" *Fantasia and Fugue in G minor*, of which the fugue was transcribed by Stokowski, and various recordings by organists have been available in the past. This is one of Bach's greatest masterpieces, a florid fantasia and a fugue of irresistible rhythm. The final two sides are devoted to the *Toccatina in F*, which is generally played without its fugue. This happens to be one of our prime favorites of all Bach's organ works, and we admit having played these sides a few more times than the others. The architecture of this piece is amazing, and its vigor and drive are indeed enormous. Biggs plays it magnificently.

The organ used for these recordings is one of the finest instruments ever recorded. Biggs has presented the entire organ literature of Bach on this organ. The recording has a great deal of resonance, which never once blurs the music. The reproduction tends to emphasize high frequencies, but achieves marvelous sonority and clarity. The set as a whole thrilled us intensely. S.

Bach: Eight Little Preludes and Fugues. Ernest White playing the organ in his studio at Church of Saint Mary the Virgin, New York. 4-12" discs in album. Technichord Set T-10. \$7.46.

Technichord accompanies this album with a splendid 36-page booklet which includes information on the music, a thematic index to each prelude and fugue, notes on the artist, information about the organ and its specifications, complete information about the recording techniques and frequency characteristics of the records, and the complete scores of all the music. Never before have we seen such a booklet, and we offer our heartiest congratulations for it to Technichord. Armed with all this interesting information, one's interest is bound to be more intense when hearing the records.

The records themselves are something for which to be thankful. All organ students will welcome this set as a fine model for that which every one of them learns. But the rest of the organ record buyers will easily find this set enchanting. These *Eight Little Preludes and Fugues* are so easy to follow that anyone with a grain of musical sense can get immediate enjoyment from them. We admit that the extended fugues of Bach prove difficult to many persons, but certainly not these little gems. Each prelude and fugue is complete on one record side,

and each prelude is separated from the fugue by a wide groove, so that you may play them continuously or individually as you wish.

To most church musicians, Ernest White is recognized as an outstanding authority on the subject; and to those who have heard him, as a brilliant organist. He is something of "a Beecham of the organ," for he does many types and schools of music equally well. His playing of the moderns is as remarkable as his understanding of the ancients. This album testifies to his prowess, and also to Technichord's skill. In all, it is a wonderful experience. S.

Bach: Toccata and Fugue in D minor. Jeanne Demessieux playing the organ at St. Mark's Church (London). 1-12" disc (D-K-1635). \$2.10.

Persons interested in organ recordings will doubtless welcome this disc for two reasons; it introduces the brilliant young French organist, Jeanne Demessieux, and it gives an opportunity of hearing the splendid organ of St. Mark's, North Audley Street, London.

We rather wish that Mlle. Demessieux had chosen something not quite as familiar as the famous *Toccata and Fugue in D minor*. However, she has, and it does show off her marvelous technique. We are glad to say, that though this is a piece designed for virtuoso playing, she keeps well within bounds, and the composer is not forgotten in any attempt to fascinate the audience.

English Decca again comes forward with another brilliant *fff* recording.

HARPSICHORD



Bach: Concerto in the Italian Style (three sides).

Bach-Vivaldi: Concerto in D major (two sides). and **Purcell: The Musick's Handmaid**—(1) Ground; (2) Lillibulero. Silvia Marlowe (harpsichord). 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set DAU-4. \$7.35.

The group of recordings in this album marks the debut of the young American harpsichordist, Silvia Marlowe, on Decca records. Miss Marlowe began her studies at the Juilliard School of Music. Upon completion of her courses there, she went abroad to continue musical studies at the École Normale in Paris. In addition, she specialized in the study of the keyboard literature of Bach under the tutelage of the famous Nadia Boulanger.

Miss Marlowe is well-known in both Canada and the United States as a concert artist and has appeared with many major symphony orchestras including the Boston Symphony, the N.B.C. Symphony, and the Rochester and Montreal Symphonies. She has received high praise from some of America's most distinguished critics.

The works in the present album are all ones that Miss Marlowe is particularly well qualified to perform, and the results that she has attained on these discs, place her in the front rank of those artists who have contributed harpsichord recordings to the repertory of recorded music. Lovers of music of this character will find this album well worth investigation. Decca has done a fine job of recording and the discs are made of unbreakable plastic—the surfaces are as smooth as glass.

R.



DICTION

Eliot: Four Quartets. T. S. Eliot (speaking). 6-12" discs in album (V-C-3598 to V-C-3603). \$11.97.

The distinguished English poet and critic, T. S. Eliot, was born in Saint Louis, Missouri in 1888 and became a naturalized British citizen in 1927 after having lived in London from 1914. The British Council, whose aim is to spread the knowledge of British culture, has subsidized this series of discs. They contain Mr. Eliot's "Four Quartets," which is made up of the following poems: 1) *Burnt Norton*; 2) *East Coker*; 3) *The Dry Salvages*; 4) *Little Gidding*.

In a note that accompanies these discs, Mr. Eliot makes the following interesting observations:

"A recording of a poem read by its author is no more definitive an 'interpretation' than a recording of a symphony conducted by the composer. The poem, if it is of any depth and complexity, will have meanings in it concealed from the author; and should be capable of being read in many ways, and with a variety of emotional emphases.

"What the recording of a poem by its author can and should preserve, is the way that poem sounded to the author when he had finished it . . . The chief value of the author's record, then, is a guide to the rhythms.

"Another reader, reciting the poem, need not feel bound to reproduce these rhythms; but, if he has studied the author's version, he can assure himself that he is departing from it deliberately, and not from ignorance."

From these remarks we gather that these records contain the "Four Quartets" as they "sounded to the author when he had finished" them. We found Mr. Eliot's reading deeply impressive, it brought to light much that we had not got from the printed page. With this thought in mind, we recommend them, and we hope that many students in our colleges will have an opportunity of hearing these recordings.

R.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$9.75.

The Art of Judging Music. By Virgil Thomson. x+318+xviii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$4.25.

The Other Side of the Record. By Charles O'Connell. xi+332+xi pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.50.

Koussevitzky. By Moses Smith. 400 pp. Allen, Towne, and Heath, Inc. (New York). Price \$4.

Metropolitan Opera Annals: A Chronicle of Artists and Performances. Compiled by William H. Seltsam. Introduction by Edward Johnson. xvi+751 pp. The H. W. Wilson Co. (New York). Price \$7.

Records for Pleasure. By John Ball, Jr., ix+214 pp. Rutgers University Press (New Brunswick, N. J.). Price \$2.50.

How to Build a Record Library. By Paul Affelder. Foreword by Sigmund Spaeth. 256 pp. E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$3.50.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Biblione, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CE—Cetra, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Costerline, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, DI—Disc, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, HW—Hargail, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, L—London Gramophone, MU—Musiercraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okoh, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paralets, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunkon, S—Sonora, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

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By mail to any address
50c per year

The Record Book (International Edition). By David Hall. xii + 1394 pp. Oliver Durrell, Inc. (New York). Price \$7.50.

Record collectors here is a book—over 1400 pages—over 9,000 foreign and domestic discs reviewed—780 composers listed—a brief history of music from its beginning to the present day—hundreds of short biographies of composers—how to build a record library—how to select a phonograph, etc., etc. Certainly David Hall's *The Record Book* is the most comprehensive volume that has ever been written on the subject.

We recall the original edition that appeared in 1940, and we recall the enthusiasm with which it was received. We understand that more than sixty thousand copies of it were sold, and if this is correct, it would seem that the success of this new International Edition is assured, for surely a large number of those persons who purchased the early version will wish this new one, and when we add to them the thousands of new collectors who have come into being since the early edition has been unavailable (it has been out-of-print for several years), we have more than enough prospects to make this unique book a "best seller" pronto.

Mr. Hall has spent two years in preparing the present edition for publication, and in our opinion, he has done a magnificent job. The first 195 pages are devoted to what the author calls "General Information." This section is really a very readable book in itself. It contains a brief but interesting history of music, a list of the various record manufacturers with a description of the type of music they specialize in, comments on the outstanding artists who are presently making recordings, hints on how to build a record library, how to make home re-

cordings, how to select a phonograph, etc., etc.

The second section containing over 1100 pages is devoted entirely to record reviews which are listed alphabetically by composers, with brief biographical notes supplied for each composer mentioned. The final pages are given over to a most comprehensive index, which makes this fine volume easy to use, and of great value as a book of reference.

Mr. Hall has carefully considered the most important recordings in the various European catalogs and has included them in his present International Edition.

* * *

At long last, Decca has issued a new complete catalog. It contains 360 pages and is completely cross-indexed. It is in five sections—the first three, consisting of listings of artists, titles and albums, are alphabetically arranged—the fourth section lists albums only, classified by the type of music they contain, and the final section is a complete breakdown of all records listed in the catalog classified under many categories, such as, Band, Sacred, Children, Christmas, Musical Comedies, etc.

It is our understanding that this new 1948 Decca Catalog contains all available Decca records manufactured in this country. It does not list the famous English *ffrr* discs which Decca imports and distributes through its dealers. The price of this catalog is 25c (postpaid within U. S. A.).

* * *

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues published during the last fifteen years are available. The price is 5c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 125 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

ORCHESTRA



Delius: Brigg Fair: An English Rhapsody. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham, 2-12" discs in album, RCA Victor Set DM-1206. \$3.50. (Also available in vinylite, DV-14, \$5.)

Brigg Fair is a charming and most characteristic bit of Delius, based on a Lincolnshire folk-song of the same name. It is in the form of theme and variations, and is one of Delius' finest scores. Its popularity on our shores is largely due to the earlier Beecham recording (Col. MX-30). Sir Thomas is again responsible for a matchless Delius reading, an art in which he is without peer. Victor is wise in releasing these recent Delius recordings which were made in England. The reproduction is excellent, making these sets true landmarks in the recorded repertory.

How Delius' music fails to make the programs of our orchestras more frequently remains a mystery to us. Certainly the American public would thoroughly enjoy it if given a reasonable chance to become acquainted with it. Delius' music is harmonic, flavored with folk-songs, lovely solo voices over delicately shifting harmonies and exquisite coloring, and many passages of strength and grandeur in clear orchestral sonority. This serene and sensitive music is individual and unique; Delius was the twilight-god of the Romantic period of music, and left a large heritage of enchanting works that defy analysis and description.

As many of Delius' recordings come in large albums, we believe *Brigg Fair*, being a shorter work, is an ideal introduction for those still unfamiliar with his magic; and we hope many persons will derive great pleasure from this remarkable set. S.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 4 in F minor, Op. 36. The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy, 5-12" discs in album, Columbia Set MM-736. \$7.25.

Grieg: Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, Op. 46. The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy, 2-12" discs in album, Columbia Set MX-291. \$3.50.

Outstanding in this brace of symphonic staples is the reproduction, which we will discuss more fully later on. The Tchaikovsky *Fourth* is easily the best available from the standpoint of interpretation as well as recording. Stokowski's rendition (Vic. DM-880) annoyed us no end when it was released and we still feel he mangled the score (although more recent concert performances have been much nicer).

The other versions suffer for one reason or another. Here, then, is the best one, in which Ormandy demonstrates that he can be dramatic without being distorting. The *Peer Gynt* has been definitely recorded by Beecham (Col. MX-180), and no one could hope to eclipse his deft reading. Ormandy does well with the music and the recording shifts the balance of favor in his direction. In case you forget, the No. 1 Suite is comprised of these sections: *Morning Mood*; *Ase's Death*; *Anitra's Dance*; and *In the Hall of the Mountain King*, and is the more popular of the two suites.

The reproduction of these sets is as excellent as anything we have had of late, which is saying a lot. Columbia used a single microphone of special design; they have also used this microphone to record concertos, dispensing with a solo mike. The effect is similar in perspective to Decca *ffrr* records, although the ponderous bass is absent. Interesting also, is the fact that the records were cut in New York, although the orchestra played in the Academy of Music in Philadelphia. The coaxial television cable carried the recording sessions to Columbia's New York studios. The coaxial cable is capable of handling high frequencies, so Columbia was able to do a high fidelity job in this manner. The results are certainly fine, and with the use of a single mike, concert hall realism is closely approached. Balance and definition are first-rate, and the timbre of the instruments is most faithful, the strings being especially good. Surfaces on our sets were smooth, and all in all it was a pleasure to hear them. S.

Kabalevsky: The Comedians, Op. 26. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Efrem Kurtz, 2-12" discs in album, Columbia Set MX-295. \$3.50.

As a successor to *Gaite Parisienne* and *Gayne*, this set is a natural. All the ingredients are here, charming, beguiling, fall-easy-on-the-ear melodies, sparkling orchestration, ten short sections of contrasting rhythms, and our old stand-by Kurtz to do justice to it all.

Kurtz presented this suite over the air last December on an "Orchestras of the Nation" broadcast with the Kansas City Philharmonic and Columbia lost no time, before the recording ban deadline, in having it recorded. *The Comedians* is a suite formed from the incidental music Kabalevsky wrote for "Inventor and Comedian," a play by Daniel first staged in 1938 at the Central Children's Theatre in Moscow. The following year the composer put the suite together in a free sequence that has nothing to do with the order of the pieces in the play, and it was performed for the first time in 1940. Kabalevsky's intention in this suite is to present a series of bright musical pictures depicting amusing and characteristic incidents in the life of a group of comedians who roam the countryside and give their lively entertainment at fairs and

festivals. The ten sections of the suite are entitled: *Prologue*; *Gallop*; *March*; *Waltz*; *Pantomime*; *Intermezzo*; *Little Lyrical Scene*; *Gavotte*; *Scherzo*; and *Epilogue*.

Originally intended for children's audiences, *The Comedians* captured the imagination of adults, as did Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*, and this gay and delightful suite is destined to be a refreshing alternate for *Gaite Parisienne* in many a household throughout the land. We cannot imagine anyone failing to fall under the spell of the *Scherzo* on the fourth side, or the *Prologue* and *Gallop* on the first side. Our enthusiasm for this music brings to mind the review of *Gayne*, which appeared in March 1947, when another contemporary Russian, Khachaturian, thrilled us with irresistible rhythms, and Kurtz turned out a performance that captured a large portion of the nation's record buyers. These sure-fire sets come few and far between, but *The Comedians* is unmistakably one.

The reproduction is first rate, making this album altogether desirable. All we can say is hear it just once, and you will certainly come under its spell. S.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Symphony No. 2, Op. 9 ("Antar"). San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1203. \$4.75.

Antar has been recorded in its entirety only once before, an amiable effort by Coppola and the Paris Conservatory Orchestra (Vic. DM-210, withdrawn). It was no match for Monteux's new set in any sense of the word. Monteux plays this fantasy for all it is worth, if not more so. Rimsky really knew his business too well, for while he could concoct and conjure any color, musical portrait, synthetic folk-tune, or whatever was needed, he was unable to penetrate too deeply or get beneath the surface of his subject. A facile technique and cunning orchestration had to suffice, and to this day they do in some of his unfading and brilliant works. *Antar* is not one of his unjustly neglected masterpieces, and cannot be compared to any of his more familiar works. Rimsky preferred to have this work called a symphonic suite, which it is, although it contains four movements, none of them symphonic in form.

Based on the tale of *Antar*, a famous Arabic warrior and poet who lived in the sixth century, the *Antar* symphony is program music which abounds in noisy orchestration and large effects. We love to explore unfamiliar music, but this score just seems to miss the mark, despite Monteux's obviously enthusiastic reading. The reproduction is clear and bright and offers *Antar's* vengeance, power, and love in stentorian, if somewhat two-dimensional, tones. We advise you to hear *Antar* before purchasing it on the strength of *Scheherazade* or *Capriccio Espagnole*. S.

Tchaikovsky: The Sleeping Beauty Ballet—Excerpts. Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. 6-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1205. \$8.75. (Also available in vinylite, DV-16, \$13.25.)

For the first time in phonographic history, a major portion of *The Sleeping Beauty* is available. The two small ballets drawn from the original, commonly known as *Sleeping Beauty* and *Aurora's Wedding*, offer but a fraction of the entire score which fills a whole evening. The complete score has been performed only in Russia and once in London.

The album contains several extra pages of pictures and side by side description and story continuity. The front liner is devoted to a foreword by Stokowski which is brilliant and informative. In it he states that within the frame of an album he has tried to include, from the complete ballet, the finest music of this beautiful and varied score. The success of this album is unquestionable, for Stokowski has selected music that makes twelve sides of delectable listening, and plays it with a grace, style, and coloring that are indeed unique with him. Stokowski is still supreme among conductors as a colorist, and we believe there are many passages in this set which could not be duplicated by another. His orchestra is not as large as the major symphony orchestras, but it is staffed with expert musicians.

Judging from a picture in the album, taken during the recording session, we assume Stokowski was trying out a new system of recording, for the arrangement of the musicians in four separated blocks is interesting and unusual. The reproduction is good, however, and is notable for clarity and resonance. We can recommend this album highly, and assure the reader that twelve sides is not too much of a good thing. S.

Bizet: Carmen—Suite No. 1. Three sides, and **Bizet: Carmen—Suite No. 2.** National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-41. \$7.35.

Here is music at once thrilling and tuneful! A brilliant example of English Decca *fff* at its best. If you have a high-fidelity phonograph, you will startle your friends with the life-like reproduction of these stirring melodies from the most popular work in the operatic repertory.

Fistoulari and the National Symphony offer a performance that calls for the highest praise, and we predict that this will be one of the largest selling albums that Decca has released in many months.

The first suite contains: *Prelude to Act I*; *Prelude to Act II*; *Les Dragons d'Alcala*; *La Garde Montante*; and *Entra-acte—Act IV*. The second suite is made up of the following sections: *Danse Bobéme*; *Intermezzo*; *Marche des Contrebandiers*; and *Nocturne*.

Walton: Overture "Portsmouth Point." Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (C-12755D). \$1.25.

We recall a recording of this selection by the B.B.C. Symphony under the direction of Adrian Boult that was made available by RCA Victor a dozen or so years ago. It did not impress us very greatly then and the years have not enhanced it in our opinion. One may have to be British to appreciate it properly. The music is based on a Rowlandson print that depicts the crowded port life of "The Point," with sailors disembarking or going off to their ships; saying good-bye, greeting folks; sellers and buyers; people with business, and idlers; and a fiddler with a wooden leg in the midst. It was first performed at the Zürich Contemporary Music Festival in 1926.

We have given you a hint of what it is all about; perhaps you will find it more interesting than we did.

Britten: Matinées Musicales (Second Suite of Five Movements from Rossini). Five sides, and **Britten: Soirées Musicales—Tarantella (First Suite of Five Movements from Rossini).** Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 3-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1204. \$4.

Here is some pleasing and tuneful music, quite different from that of this composer recently heard in the opera *Peter Grimes*. Just such music as the Boston "Pops" excels in, and that fine organization certainly gives it a great performance on these discs.

Matinées Musicales and *Soirées Musicales* were composed for the American Ballet Theater. The five sections of the *Matinées Musicales* (March; Nocturne; Waltz; Pantomime; Moto Perpetuo), together with the final section (Tarantella) of *Soirées Musicales* are contained on these records. Britten drew upon the works of the celebrated Italian composer Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868) for his themes for this music. Some of them were taken from Rossini's *William Tell* and *Pechés de vieillesse* and the balance from the whimsical collection of piano pieces he wrote during the latter years of his life.

Dvorák: Overture "In der Natur," Op. 91. Czech Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Rafael Kubelik. 2-12" discs (V-C-3628 and V-C-3629) (manual sequence). \$3.99.

In der Natur (Amid Nature) is the first of three concert overtures which Dvorák composed in 1891, the year before he made his famous visit to the United States. The other two are *Carneval* and *Oibello*. Until these discs reached the studio, we do not recall ever having heard the present work. It is typical Dvorák music, and as the title indicates it stems from the soil; it breathes the atmosphere of

the countryside of his beloved Southern Bohemia. While it is in no sense great music, it has a nostalgic flavor and is restful and mighty pleasant to listen to. It is a joy to withdraw from the bustle of our modern life and relax to just such peaceful and tuneful music as the composer has conceived for us in this selection. The Czech Philharmonic provides a sympathetic and knowing rendition of this lovely music. It has been splendidly recorded.

Respighi: Brazilian Impressions. Munich Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Oswald Kabasta. 2-12" discs (V-DB-4643 and V-DB-4644) (manual sequence). \$5.25.

This recording has been listed in the European catalogs for several years but it reached the studio for the first time a few days ago. *Brazilian Impressions* is one of Respighi's later symphonic poems (the composer died in 1936) and has seldom appeared on programs in this country. It is of interest largely for the superb orchestration rather than the musical content. Supposedly it is Respighi's impression of Brazil, but to us it seems more Italian than Brazilian. It is not in a class with this composer's *The Fountains of Rome* or *The Pines of Rome*.

It has been well recorded by the Munich Philharmonic under the direction of Oswald Kabasta.

Franck: Rédemption—Morceau Symphonique. Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Désiré Defauw. 1-12" disc (V-12-0187). \$1.25.

From Franck's almost forgotten symphonic poem for soprano solo, chorus and orchestra entitled *Rédemption*, Désiré Defauw has selected the orchestral section listed above and proceeds to direct an interesting performance by the Chicago Symphony. Those interested in music out of the beaten path will probably find the present disc quite attractive. Reproduction—excellent.

Grieg: Sigurd Jorsalfar—Homage March, Op. 56, No. 3. Hallé Orchestra conducted by Constant Lambert. 1-12" disc (C-72517D). \$1.25.

Several recordings of this march have been made, but upon checking the catalogs we note that all of them have been deleted; thus, the present version by the Hallé Orchestra under the direction of Constant Lambert is particularly welcome. Those interested will find the present recording highly satisfactory.

Strauss: Die Fledermaus—Overture. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" Disc (V-12-0189). \$1.25.

Strauss: Der Zigeunerbaron—Overture. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-12-0188). \$1.25.

There have been numerous recordings made of

both of these popular Strauss overtures. Strauss experts may prefer this or that version but generally speaking we rather feel that most anyone would be highly pleased with the present recordings by the Boston "Pops."

CONCERTO



Handel: Concerto in B flat, Op. 4, No. 6. Marcel Grandjany (harp) with the RCA Victor Chamber Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. Three sides, and **Kirchhoff**—arr. Grandjany: **Aria and Rigaudon.** One side, and **Couperin**—arr. Grandjany: **Soeur Monique.** One side, and **Francisque**—arr. Grandjany; **Pavane et Branslés.** Marcel Grandjany (harp). 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1201. \$4.75.

According to Handel's autograph, the *B flat Concerto* here recorded was actually written for harp ("Concerto per la Harpa"), although it has for years been played on the organ or harpsichord. In any event, Handel merely indicated a simple figured bass, as was the custom, and the harpist was to embellish it after the manner of organists or harpsichordists. This Mr. Grandjany has done, and he has also inserted at the beginning of the third record side, a cadenza which he composed in Handelian style. While it may all seem complicated to read about in the elaborate notes which are supplied with the set, the music itself is most pleasant to hear. Grandjany plays with obvious virtuosity and seems to draw many qualities and shadings of tone from his harp. Morel, who is turning out to be one of Victor's most dependable conductors, provides well-adjusted support in his accompaniment.

The three final sides are devoted to well chosen transcriptions for the harp by Grandjany, which he performs with great skill. This music of several centuries ago emerges as fine harp material. The classic concerto and these three highly distilled little pieces combine to make up an attractive album, which we thoroughly enjoyed. We thought the reproduction of the harp was unusually good, with all the delicate gradations of color and dynamics very clear and apparent. It will be a pity if only harp students bother to hear this set, for it is worth the time of many of us.

Grieg: Concerto in A minor, Op. 16. Oscar Levant (piano) with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Efreim Kurtz. Seven sides, and **Rachmaninoff: Prelude in E flat major, Op. 23, No. 6.** Oscar Levant (piano). 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-741. \$6.00. Also available on vinylite: MMV-741. \$9.00.

And now we add Oscar Levant to the long list of pianists who have recorded Grieg's famous piano con-

certo. Among them we find such outstanding names as Rubinstein, Gieseking, Moiseivitch, Bachaus, de Greef, Friedman *et al.* Mr. Levant is certainly stepping into fast company. Our thought is that most music critics will find that he does not measure up with the recorded performances of Rubinstein and Gieseking. Rubinstein is outstanding in his brilliant treatment of this work, and he has the advantage of superb support by the Philadelphia Orchestra under Ormandy; Gieseking will be favored by those who prefer a more lyric concept of this romantic music. Our personal choice is Gieseking, because he presents Grieg's music as we rather feel that the composer intended it to be heard. It is sentimental music and, in our opinion, it requires the poetic touch that Gieseking gives it to a far better degree than any other pianist who has recorded it, including the talented artist who has provided the present version.

R.

Medtner Society Set. Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Op. 50 (nine sides). Nicolas Medtner (piano) with Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Issay Dobrowen. **Arabesque, Op. 7, No. 2** (one side). **Fairy Tale, Op. 51, No. 1** and **Fairy Tale, Op. 26, No. 3** (two sides). Nicolas Medtner (piano). **Spanish Romance, Op. 52, No. 5** and **Butterfly, Op. 28, No. 3** (one side). Tatiana Makushina (soprano) accompanied by Nicolas Medtner (piano). **To a Dreamer, Op. 32, No. 6** (one side). Oda Slobodskaya (soprano) accompanied by Nicolas Medtner (piano). 7-12" discs in album (V-DB-9191 to V-DB-9197). \$18.38.

NOTE: This set was received too late for review this month. A review of it will appear in our June issue.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Toch: The Chinese Flute. Pacific Sinfonietta conducted by Manuel Compinsky with Alice Mock (soprano) and Martin A. Ruderman (flute). 3-12" discs in album. Alco Set AC-203. \$6.95.

Ernst Toch was born in Vienna in 1887. After studying medicine and philosophy he taught himself music. In 1909 he won the Mozart Prize for composition (Frankfurt am Main) and a year later he won the Mendelssohn Prize (Berlin). In 1935 he came to the New School for Social Research in New York to teach composition. Two years later he went to California where he still resides. He became an American citizen on July 26, 1940. He has written numerous works largely in the field of chamber music, in recent years he has devoted most of his time to composing for the films and radio.

The present work dates from 1921. It is a series of mood pictures based on ancient Chinese poems—impressionistic in character. It is in no sense a group of

songs but rather a symphony in miniature with the human voice an added part. The whole composition is very effective and one that rates careful consideration. It is treated in a modern manner but Toch never puts in queer twists just to startle his listeners. One has a feeling, as he listens to *The Chinese Flute*, that the composer is always sincere, that he has something to say, and that he is saying it in a style to make the mood he wishes to create quite clear. This work is scored for two flutes, two clarinets, strings, celeste and percussion.

The artists who have made this recording are thoroughly adequate and those persons who are interested in music of this character will be pleased with what they hear on these discs. The recording has been satisfactorily accomplished on plastic records with silent surfaces. R.

Smetana: Trio in G minor, Opus 15, for Violin, Cello, and Piano. Louis Kaufman (violin), Willem van den Burg (violoncello), and Rudolf Firkusny (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Vox Set 628. \$4.75.

This is the first recording of this early work of Smetana, which the composer dedicated to the memory of his eldest daughter, who died when she was but a child of four. It was composed in 1855 shortly after the child's death and is supposed to have considerable biographical significance; however, except for the melancholy strains that appear from time to time, we cannot sense the program that certain musicologists have supplied for it.

To us it is thrilling music—a rather unique chamber music work, in that it contains numerous long solo passages for each of the three instruments. The beauty of this work lies in these solos rather than in the ensemble passages. This is particularly true in this recording because in the concerted sections, the piano seems to predominate and to overshadow the other instruments. We admit that we are not familiar with this trio, and it may be that it should be played that way, but to us it would seem that the performance lacks proper balance. We have the impression that we are listening to three soloists rather than an instrumental trio.

Philadelphians will have a special interest in this recording because Willem van den Burg was solo violoncellist with the Philadelphia Orchestra for nine seasons.

Buxtehude: Sonata (Edition Julzer No. 13). Else Marie Bruun (violin), Julius Koppel (violin), Alberto Medici (violoncello) and Mogens Wöldike (cembalo). 1-12" disc (V-DB-5249). \$2.63.

Little of the music of Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707), the great German organist and composer, is heard today, and only an occasional recording will be found in the various catalogs. Although Bach was but

twenty-two years of age when Buxtehude died, his predecessor had a marked influence on his music. It is related that Bach made a trip of over 200 miles on foot to hear Buxtehude play the organ. It has been pretty clearly established that Buxtehude was one of the most famous musicians of the last half of the seventeenth century.

The present work is a lovely bit of chamber music and has been beautifully played by the accomplished artists who have made this recording. Aside from its historical significance, it is most charming music to listen to. The reproduction is of the best. Here is an unusual item that is worthy of investigation.

Haydn: Cassation in F major. Chamber orchestra conducted by Edvard Fendler. 2-12" discs and 1-10" disc (OL-110 to OL-112). \$5.80.

Mozart: Cassation No. 2 in B-flat major, K. 99. L'Oiseau-Lyre Orchestra conducted by Fernand Oubradous. 2-12" discs (OL-124 and OL-125). \$4.20.

A Cassation is a piece of instrumental music of the 18th century consisting of several movements designed for playing in the open air. It is quite similar to a Serenade or a Divertimento. The present works by Haydn and Mozart meet these requirements except that we can see no reason why they were intended, if they were, to be played out-of-doors. Both are quite delicate and charming, and quite intimate. We associate them in our mind with a lovely 18th century drawing room.

Both are beautifully played by groups of adequate musicians. The Haydn work in five movements is directed by Edvard Fendler, and the Mozart selection in seven quite short movements by Fernand Oubradous. These discs give us examples of the superb work that is being done in France by Éditions de L'Oiseau-Lyre. A complete catalog of these recordings is available gratis upon request.

Stephen Foster Melodies. The London String Quartet. 4-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-582. \$3.94.

This album ought to go big at Hayseed Corners and other rural communities. Most of the melodies have plenty of tear-pulling sentiment; and the others, that zip that appeals to our rural friends. However, there may be enough Foster fans in the big cities to make this group of discs pretty popular almost everywhere. Time will tell.

The arrangements of these Foster songs for string quartet are extremely simple and the well-known melodies are not obscured by arty embellishments. The London String Quartet plays them with sympathy and a knowing sense of the original well-beloved ballads.

The selections in this album are: *Oh Susannah*; *De Camptown Races*; *Old Folks at Home*; *Sweet Laura Lee*; *Beautiful Dreamer*; *Gentle Annie*; *Jeanie With*

the *Light Brown Hair*; and *Old Black Joe*.

Bach: Trio Sonata in G major. The Moyses Trio: Marcel Moyses (flute), Blanche Honegger-Moyses (violin), and Louis Moyses (piano). 1-12" disc (V-C-3671). \$2.

This delightful little sonata will be found in the ninth volume of the Bach Gesellschaft edition, and is just the sort of music that Bach turned out in large quantities. It was written to be enjoyed by the people of the composer's time, and for the players who were presently available to perform it. It has come down to us and we may enjoy it too when it is presented by such able artists as those who have made this recording. We do not hesitate to recommend this disc most highly.

VOCAL



Sea Shanties. Leonard Warren (baritone) with orchestra and chorus conducted by Morris Levine. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-1186. \$5.

In general there are four types of sea shanties, all of which are represented here. They are the "short drag" shanty, used where one or two good heaves on the line are sufficient to accomplish the job at hand; the "halliard" shanty, which accompanies such heavy and prolonged tasks as hoisting sail; the "capstan" shanty, the most musically rich of all, used for long drawn out jobs like weighing anchor or warping a ship into dock; and finally "foc'sle" songs, rousing ballads or ditties in which the shantyman and crew join for their own amusement. Included in this album are *Haul-A-Way*, *Joe*, an example of the "short drag" shanty; the familiar *Blow the Man Down*, a "halliard" shanty; *Rio Grande*, *Shenandoah*, *Low Lands*, *The Drunken Sailor* and *A-Rovin'*, all "capstan" shanties; and *The Drummer and the Cook*, a "foc'sle" song.

Leonard Warren with fine support from an excellent male chorus makes these ditties sound mighty fine on these discs—lusty songs for real men—splendidly recorded.

Schubert: Der Hirt auf dem Felsen, Op. 129. Dorothy Maynor (soprano) accompanied by George Schick (piano) and David Oppenheim (clarinet). 1-12" disc (V-12-0186). \$1.25.

Schubert: Der Hirt auf dem Felsen, Op. 129. Margaret Ritchie (soprano) accompanied by Gerald Moore (piano) and Reginald Kell (clarinet). 1-12" disc (V-C-3688). \$2.

Just ten years ago RCA Victor released a recording of this Schubert song by Elisabeth Schumann with George Reeves at the piano and Reginald Kell playing the clarinet obbligato. It was well received at the time of its issuance but has disappeared from the

catalog, just as so many fine records have.

However, we have nothing to worry about as far as this selection is concerned for we now have two new versions to take its place. Dorothy Maynor has made a recording of it for RCA Victor and Margaret Ritchie has made one for HMV, which just arrived in a shipment from England. We suggest that those persons who are interested should hear both of the new recordings and make a choice. We rather lean toward the British version because we prefer Miss Ritchie's rendition and we do not think that Reginald Kell can be bettered for the clarinet part.

Schubert: An mein Clavier. One side, and Schubert: Das Mädchen. (Sung in German). Elisabeth Schumann (soprano) with piano accompaniment by Gerald Moore. 1-10" disc (V-DA-1864). \$1.95.

Zeller: Wie mein Ahn'1 zwanzig Jahr'. (Sung in English). One side, and **Zeller: Sei nicht bö's** (from "Der Obersteiger"). (Sung in German). Elisabeth Schumann (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Lawrence Collingswood. 1-10" disc (V-E-552). \$1.95.

For those who have nostalgic souvenirs of the delicate and refined art of Elisabeth Schumann, here are four selections that will undoubtedly fill a need.

Mme. Schumann apparently made these records in England several years ago, as her voice has a fresh and silvery sound it has not possessed in her more recent and infrequent appearances.

Two unfamiliar Schubert songs and two waltzes from the pen of the Austrian operetta composer, Karl Zeller, comprise Mme. Schumann's selections.

The Schubert songs—*An mein Clavier* and *Das Mädchen* are not too alluring. They lack the magic of this great lieder writer's best output. The Zeller selections are typical of Viennese late 19th century waltzes. *Sei nicht bö's* is from the operetta, *Der Obersteiger*, while on the reverse is the better known *Nightingale Song*, which Mme. Schumann sings in excellent English, and which is ornamented with imitation bird calls.

Gerald Moore is at the piano for Mme. Schumann during the Schubert songs, while an orchestra officiates for the Zeller waltzes. Reproduction is satisfactory. D.

Mozart: Et incarnatus est (from "Mass in C minor, K. 427"). Erna Berger (soprano) with Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6536). \$2.63.

We cannot imagine a finer rendition of this section of Mozart's *Mass in C minor* than the one that Miss Berger presents on this disc. Purists have much difficulty in associating this music with a religious ceremony and quite properly so; it is really a coloratura aria in the manner of the opera. If one will

forget its religious significance, and accept it purely as music, he may enjoy it fully.

It is interesting to note that Mozart planned to have a newly composed mass sung at Salzburg when he brought Constanze there as his wife. He had a good portion of it ready, including a "finished sketch" of the *Et incarnatus*, which Miss Berger sings so effectively on the present disc, but for some unknown reason he never completed the work and it is known as Mozart's "Unfinished Mass."

Kleinsinger: Brooklyn Baseball Cantata. Robert Merrill (baritone) with orchestra and chorus conducted by Russ Case. 2-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DC-42. \$3.

Here is a rather amusing cantata—as American as bubble gum. If you are a baseball fan, you'll probably get quite a kick out of this one. In it Robert Merrill takes you to Ebbets Field for an important game between the Dodgers and the Yankees—the umpire sings his seriocomic aria, the pinch-hitter's girl friend in the stands pleads with him to knock it over the fence in her song "It's Up to You," and the butchers sell their hot dogs, with or without mustard. It's swell stuff, if you're in the mood for a musical epic on the great American game. It has been splendidly recorded.

Romberg: The Desert Song—Gems. Earl Wrightson (baritone), Frances Greer (soprano), Jimmy Carroll (tenor), The Guild Choristers, and orchestra conducted by Al Goodman. 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set K-12. \$4.

The popularity of Romberg's *The Desert Song* never seems to wane; thus, there is probably a waiting market for this album. The artists are adequate and under the brilliant leadership of Al Goodman the selections appear on these discs in a most attractive manner. The reproduction is highly satisfactory.

The musical numbers are: *Overture; Riff Song; French Military Marching Song; Romance; Love's Dear Yearning; The Desert Song; One Flower Grows Alone in Your Garden and One Alone.*

Grieg: Springtide. One side, and **R. Strauss: Where There's Love.** Jeanette MacDonald (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Robert Armbruster. 1-10" disc (V-10-1420). \$1.

Jeanette MacDonald sings two selections from the current film "Three Daring Daughters" in which she co-stars with Jose Iturbi. *Where There's Love* is based on the waltzes from "Der Rosenkavalier" and Grieg's *Springtide* is sung with English lyrics supplied by N. H. Dole.

Miss MacDonald's voice sounded a bit shrill to us; this was particularly evident in *Where There's Love*. Perhaps those who have seen the picture will be more interested in this disc than we are at the mo-

ment.

Young People's Church of the Air Quartet. (Seven Gospel Songs.) 3-10" discs in album. Sacred Records Set S-2. \$3.94.

The thousands of listeners to the Young People's Church of the Air will doubtless be glad to know that an album of recordings is now available by the male quartet (Allan, Ray, Joe and Ken). Percy Crawford is, of course, the director. The selections chosen for this album are: *The Old Account; I'm Moving Up Home; Sometime; Jubilee; Beyond the Sunset; I'm on the Battlefield and It Was for You.* The reproduction and the record surfaces are satisfactory.

Brahms: Der Kranz, Op. 84, No. 2 and Brahms: Der Schmied, Op. 19, No. 4. One side, and **Brahms: Feldeinsamkeit, Op. 86, No. 2.** Lotte Lehmann (soprano) accompanied by Paul Ulanowsky (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1405). \$1.

Miss Lehmann presents these three Brahms' songs in her usual highly artistic manner, and she is ably supported by the excellent accompanist, Paul Ulanowsky. We do not recall another recording of *Der Kranz*; the other two have appeared on discs numerous times. Fine reproduction is an added feature.

Tchaikovsky: None but the lonely heart, Op. 6, No. 6. One side, and **d'Hardelot: Because.** Leonard Warren (baritone) accompanied by Willard Sektberg (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1406). \$1.

Routine renditions of these well-known selections by the popular baritone, Leonard Warren—nicely recorded by RCA Victor.

OPERA

Operatic Arias by Polyna Stoska. Polyna Stoska (soprano) with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Max Rudolf. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-294. \$3.50.

R. Strauss: Ariadne auf Naxos, Op. 60—Sein wir wieder gut.

Weber: Der Freischütz—Wie nahte mir der Schlummer bevor ich ihn gesehen (recit.); Leise, leise, fromme Weise (aria); Doch Wiel Täuscht mich nicht mein Ohr? (Act II).

Korngold: Die Tote Stadt, Op. 21—Marietta's Lied.

A vote of thanks is due Columbia and its new soprano, Polyna Stoska, for making possible three arias from the soprano repertoire that are not to be found in present-day catalogs. Miss Stoska here makes her operatic debut on records, having just finished her first successful season at the Metropolitan.

The singer made her initial New York success with the City Center Opera, where her work as the Composer in Richard Strauss' *Ariadne auf Naxos* attracted wide attention. The aria which Miss Stoska offers from that opera is contained in the prologue, and Columbia tells us that it has never before been recorded, which well may be true—certainly it has not been recorded in America. The music and the singing are exciting.

Marietta's song from Korngold's *Die Tote Stadt* (the vehicle used for Maria Jeritzka's sensational American debut) is a lovely aria in two identical stanzas with a connecting section. Not since Irene Jessner sang this number for RCA Victor (now no longer available) has this aria been recorded. It is a worth-while addition to the recorded operatic music which exists to-day, and its romantic melody should prove as popular as when the golden-hued Jeritzka sang it over 25 years ago.

Weber's great scena and aria from *Der Freischütz* was sorely in need of a modern recording, not having been made since the early electric days of the phonograph when both Jeritzka and Lotte Lehmann had it in their then popular lists. This is one of the great classic examples of the operatic recitative and aria. It is wonderful music, and exemplifies Weber at his best. Miss Stoska does not obliterate memories of former performances by Emmy Destinn, Lotte Lehmann, Elisabeth Rethberg and others, but she sings the aria with admirable breath-control and firmness of tone.

The new singer's voice can be described as a good-sized lyric soprano. The tone is clear and has body. Only in moments of stress do Miss Stoska's notes become hard and stiff. Hers is not one of those flowing, shimmering lyric sopranos; it is more notable for its bright solidity of tone. The style is admirable; the whole impression most pleasant.

The records were accomplished on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera with the house orchestra under conductor Max Rudolf, who gives an excellent account of himself. Balance between singer and instruments is admirable; volume controls are used with discrimination and honesty. The surfaces are better than Columbia surfaces have been of late.

MAX DE SCHAUSENSEE.

Mascagni: L'Amico Fritz—Duetto delle ciliege (Act II). Ferruccio Tagliavini (tenor) and Pia Tassinari (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Pietro Mascagni. Three sides, and **Mascagni: L'Amico Fritz**—Intermezzo (Act III). Orchestra conducted by Pietro Mascagni. 2-12" discs in album. Cetra Set 105. \$4.73.

The *Cherry Duets* taken from Cetra's complete album of Pietro Mascagni's *L'Amico Fritz* is the gem of the score. Collectors, who will not want to invest in the opera as a whole, may indeed welcome the opportunity to be able to acquire this lovely number

separately.

Pietro Mascagni, himself, directs the orchestra, which enhances the value of the recording greatly. Furthermore, the art of Pia Tassinari and Ferruccio Tagliavini is shown at its very best in this melodious music. It is hard to imagine a better Suzel than Mme. Tassinari, or a more suitable Fritz than the popular tenor.

Recording is admirable and the surfaces of these discs seem even better than those in the complete set. On side 4 you will find the aged Mascagni giving an authoritative account of the pleasing *Intermezzo* from his little opera. That it does not equal its more famous sister from *Cavalleria* will hardly surprise those who are well acquainted with Mascagni's operas. D.

Ponchielli: La Gioconda—L'amo come il fulgor del creato (Act II). (Sung in Italian). One side, and **Cilea: Adriana Lecouvreur**—Io son sua per l'amore (Act II). Gina Cigna (soprano) and Cloe Elmo (mezzo-soprano) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (CE-BB-25029). \$2.63.

Verdi: Ernani—O dei verd'anni miei (Act III). One side, and **Ponchielli: La Gioconda**—O monumento. Antenore Reali (baritone) with Orchestra Sinfonica della Radio conducted by A. Basile. 1-12" disc (CE-BB-25150). \$2.63.

Cilea: L'Arlesiana—Racconto di Baldassare. One side, and **Leoncavallo: Zazà**—Zazà, piccola zingara. Antenore Reali (baritone) with Orchestra Sinfonica della Radio conducted by A. Basile. 1-12" disc (CE-BB-25130). \$2.63.

The gem of this batch of Cetra records is indisputably the famous passage, *L'amo come il fulgor del creato* sung by Gioconda and Laura in Ponchielli's opera. Never has this been so well sung on records as it is here by Gina Cigna and Cloe Elmo.

There is no doubt left in one's mind about the passion these two ladies feel for the unfortunate tenor-hero, as they give heat for heat. "I love him like the light of creation!" exclaims Laura, and her rival immediately thunders, "And I love him as the lion loves fresh blood!" These are operatic sentiments in the grand manner, to put it mildly.

Mme. Cigna and Mme. Elmo leave no stone unturned in the publishing of these scorching sentiments; the result is a thrilling record. On the reverse, these two ladies sing a long passage from the seldom heard opera, *Adriana Lecouvreur*, by Cilea—interesting, but not comparable to the Gioconda fireworks.

Four records by an unknown baritone—Antenore Reali—are more striking for size and breadth of tone than for anything subtle or finished in the singer's art. These numbers are arias from *Zaza*, *Ernani*, *Gioconda* and *L'Arlesiana*. The last named is an interesting piece of music by Cilea and was formerly in-

finitely better sung and recorded for Columbia by Mario Basiola.

Mr. Reali doesn't seem to bother much with the fine points of vocal art, being evidently preoccupied with stentorian climaxes. Often his unpredictable voice is flat; sometimes sharp. Its size is, however, impressive. The baritone's voice is evidently not easy to record, and the orchestra is far too loud and brassy for comfort in the big and expansive moments. For those who place loudness before finesse, these records may do.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Donizetti: Don Pasquale—So anch' io la virtù magica (Act I). One side, and **Verdi: Rigoletto**—Tutte le feste al tempio (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Olympia Boronat (soprano) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1023). \$2.50.

Verdi: Aida—Già i sacerdoti adunansi (Act IV). One side, and **Verdi: Aida**—Aida a me togliesti (Act IV). (Sung in Italian). Louise Homer (soprano) and Enrico Caruso (tenor) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1025). \$2.50.

Thomas: Mignon—Addio Mignon, fa core (Act II). One side, and **Verdi: La Traviata**—De' Miei bollenti spiriti (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Fernando De Lucia (tenor) with piano accompaniment. 1-12" disc (V-15-1024). \$2.50.

Massenet: Hérodiade—Vision fugitive (Act. II). One side, and **Massenet: Le Roi de Lahore**—Promesse de mon avenir (Act IV). (Sung in French). Maurice Renaud (baritone) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1021). \$2.50.

Verdi: Don Carlos—O don fatale! (Act IV). (Sung in Italian). One side, and **Harris: The Hills O' Skye**. (Sung in English). Janet Spencer (contralto) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1022). \$2.50.

The fifth installment of RCA Victor's Heritage Series is an interesting one. It brings us some singers who are not so well known as the accepted favorites.

Olympia Boronat (1859-1933), a Spanish soprano of legendary brilliance, scored her greatest successes in the Russia of the Tsars, during the eighteenth-nineties, where she was Sembrich's greatest rival. Tchaikovsky mentions her in passing, in his diaries, when he heard her sing *Aida* in Florence in 1890. The voice on these records is bright and firm and capable of both flexibility and legato. Note the trill on the *Don Pasquale* side, for only Patti and Melba could compare with her in this effect.

Janet Spencer, a native of Boston, was an oratorio and concert singer of peculiarly fine reputation about thirty years ago. Her voice is a sound, warm contralto, rather like Louise Homer's, only on a reduced scale. Her singing of Victor Harris' *Hills O' Skye* shows her best qualities. The aria of Eboli from

Verdi's *Don Carlos* needs a more operatic approach than Miss Spencer was able to give it; nevertheless, her tone is fine. The singer's voice might have benefited by more forward recording; sometimes it sounds muffled. When last heard of, Miss Spencer was teaching voice in Los Angeles.

Fernando de Lucia (1860-1925) was not only the Metropolitan's original Canio in *Pagliacci*, but one of the most famous of the pre-Caruso tenors—a master of the true *bel canto* style. These arias from *Mignon* and *Traviata* afford plenty of opportunities for the singer to display his long diminuendos, his feathery pianissimos, and his unerring sense of effects. His tone had a bite, too, when he so desired. These are excellent examples of the kind of singing that aroused audiences during the 80's and 90's. The recording, which was accomplished with piano accompaniment in Milan during 1906, is remarkably forward and vivid.

Maurice Renaud (1862-1933) was the legitimate successor of Victor Maurel and Jean Lassalle, and was the greatest French baritone of his period. He was the rage of Paris—and with good reason, for he was a very handsome man who knew how to costume himself. His voice was splendidly sonorous and capable of languishing accents. One hopes that all young baritones who tackle *Vision Fugitive* from Massenet's *Hérodiade* will listen to this record, for everything that is to be learned of this aria can be found here. This is glorious singing. The air from Massenet's *Le Roi de Lahore* is another perfect example of the French school.

Louise Homer (1871-1947) and Enrico Caruso (1873-1921) sing the duo from the Judgment Scene of *Aida*, and here indeed you will find the grand manner as you cannot find it today, in an age which is not too conducive to this style. Mme. Homer's was one of the few voices that could stand up to the tonal glory of the peerless Enrico. This is a more than life-size performance, sung not only with astonishing power, but also with consummate vocal beauty.

Surface blemishes still persist on these red Vinylite records, thus producing clicks and bumps that are very disconcerting. We have heard other plastic records, some made by independent concerns, that are free of these nuisances. Of all records, these of the Heritage Series should be particularly perfect and without flaw.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Monteverdi—arr. Respighi: **Arianna**—Lasciatemi morire. (Sung in Italian). Gabriella Gatti (soprano) with London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vincenzo Bellezza. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6515). \$2.63.

This Lament is the only selection that has survived from Monteverdi's opera *Arianna*, which historians tell us was performed in 1608 before an audience of over four thousand persons. After the Lament appeared as a solo in *Arianna*, the composer scored it

as a five-part madrigal (it was thus recorded under the direction of Nadia Boulanger—see RCA Victor Album M-496) and included it in his 6th book of 1614; it again appeared with sacred words as the five-part *Pianta della Madonna* in 1640. Apparently the composer was very fond of this aria, and well he might be, for it is surely a gorgeous work. It is superbly presented on this record by Gabriella Gatti, whose lovely voice and rare musical insight are in evidence on this exceptional disc.

Wagner: Tannhauser—Blick' ich umher (Act II, Scene 4). One side, and **Wagner: Tannhauser**—Wie Todesahnung. O du mein holder Abendstern (Recitative and Air). (Act III, Scene 2). (Sung in German). Joel Berglund (baritone) with orchestra conducted by Leo Blech. 1-12" disc (V-12-0185). \$1.25.

This is the first recording that has come to our notice of the Swedish baritone, Joel Berglund, who made his Metropolitan debut as Hans Sachs in *Die Meistersinger* on January 9, 1946 (Berglund had sung previously in New York in 1938 but not at the Metropolitan).

Mr. Berglund has a resonant voice of great fluidity and a warm pleasing quality. He is an experienced singer, and as one listens to the present record he has the feeling that the soloist is always quite sure of himself, and is living the character he is representing without great effort on his part. It is a comfortable feeling for the listener, and he (the listener) is able to relax and enjoy the music to the fullest.

We surely hope that RCA Victor has other recordings by Mr. Berglund, and that it will not be long before we will have the pleasure of reviewing some of them.

Massenet: Manon—Ah! dispar, vision (Act III). One side, and **Massenet: Werther**—Ah! non mi ridestar! (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with the Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, Conducted by Rainaldo Zamboni. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6346). \$2.63.

Halevy: La Juive—Rachel! Quand du Seigneur (Act IV). One side, and **Lalo: Le Roi d'Ys**—Vainement, ma bien Aimée (Act III). (Sung in French). Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with the Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, conducted by Rainaldo Zamboni. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6366). \$2.63.

These four selections by Beniamino Gigli were made during the tenor's visit to Covent Garden in the autumn of 1946. They constitute the most amazing proof of how beautifully, youthfully and easily a tenor can sing (if his vocal emission is as good as Mr. Gigli's) at the age of 56.

The silken sounds that issue from these discs are indeed hard to believe, if one considers the

singer's age and the length of his career (debut 1914).

The four arias sung by Mr. Gigli are all fine examples of the French school in its various aspects. They are from Halevy's *La Juive*, Massenet's *Manon* and *Werther*, and Lalo's *Le Roi d'Ys*. The Massenet arias are sung in Italian, the Lalo and Halevy excerpts in Gigli's excruciatingly bad French. Certainly this is not even a near approach to true French traditional style, but Gigli's voice is so beautiful that many will accept these records gladly for the sheer beauty of the sounds that issue from their surfaces.

The *Rachele! Quand du Seigneur* from *La Juive* is of interest as it brings Gigli into direct comparison with Caruso. Gigli does not possess the vast volume or the sumptuous, dark, baritone quality of the unforgettable Caruso; but Gigli's lyrical quality makes his voice sound more youthful at 56 than Caruso at 47.

The Royal Opera House Orchestra of Covent Garden, under the leadership of Rainaldo Zamboni provides excellent accompaniment; the recordings are as clear, sane and well-balanced as British recordings are apt to be. MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Flotow: Martha—Ah! che a voi perdoni Iddio. Act III. Wittrisch, Klose, Berger, Beck, and Carli with Choir and The Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Cornelius Kun. One side, and **Kienzl: Der Evangelimann**—Selig sind, die Verfolgung leiden. Marcel Wittrisch (tenor) with Children's Choir and The Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Cornelius Kun. 1-12" disc (V-DB-4411). \$2.63.

When this disc arrived in a recent shipment from Europe, we renewed the acquaintance of an old friend. We had not seen a copy of it since before World War II. When it was available it was a great favorite with collectors of operatic recordings, largely because of the excellent rendition of the selection from Kienzl's *Der Evangelmann* by Marcel Wittrisch and the Children's Choir. It is lovely music that is seldom heard in this country. The quintet from the third act of *Martha* is nicely accomplished by able artists and adds to the attractiveness of this fine operatic disc. The reproduction is entirely satisfactory.

Nielsen: Maskarade—Magdalones Dansescene. (Sung in Danish). Ingeborg Steffensen, Einar Norby, and Aksel Schiøtz with orchestra conducted by Johan Hye-Knudsen. One side, and **Hartmann: Liden Kirsten**—Tavlebordsduetten. (Sung in Danish). Edith Oldrup-Pedersen and Aksel Schiøtz with orchestra conducted by Johan Hye-Knudsen. 1-12" disc (V-DB-5237). \$2.63.

This unusual disc has many features. It gives us an opportunity of hearing the brilliant tenor, Aksel

Schiotz, in two concerted numbers. Collectors of his recordings will certainly prize this record. It also presents attractive selections from the works of two Danish operatic composers who are little known in this country. Carl Nielsen (1865-1931), whose opera *Maskarade* had its first performance in Copenhagen in 1906, and J. P. E. Hartmann (1805-1900), whose *Liden Kirsten* dates from 1846.

Both selections are lovely to listen to and those seeking the unusual in the field of concerted operatic pieces will surely find the present disc quite attractive. The reproduction is highly satisfactory throughout.

CHORAL



I Live Not Where I Love (trad.—arr. Shaw). One side, and **The Herdmaid's Song** (Old Gaelic air, arr. Robertson). Glasgow Orpheus Choir conducted by Hugh Robertson. 1-10" disc (V-B-9501). \$1.42.

Brahms: In Silent Night. One side, and **Kedron** (arr. Robertson). Glasgow Orpheus Choir conducted by Hugh Robertson. 1-10" disc (V-B-9549). \$1.42.

Americans interested in choral music have learned to know and admire the Glasgow Orpheus Choir through its recordings. The two discs listed above have just arrived in a shipment from England and they will be found to be well up to the high standard set by this splendid organization.

Stanford: O for a closer walk with God. One side, and **The people that in darkness sat** ("Dundee"). Choir of the Royal School of Church Music directed by Sir Sidney H. Nicholson with organ accompaniment. 1-12" disc (RSCM-ROX 188). \$2.10.

Merbecke Communion Service. Choir of the Royal School of Church Music directed by Sir Sidney H. Nicholson with organ accompaniment. 1-12" disc (RSCM-ROX 189). \$2.10.

The two discs listed above are among the most popular ones that have been issued by The Royal School of Church Music. The first one contains the anthem *O for a closer walk with God* and the hymn *The people that in darkness sat*. These recordings were taken from a broadcast of an Evening Service that was broadcast by the B.B.C. on January 29, 1939. The recording was successfully accomplished, and the rendition of these selections is in the tradition of the English Church as exemplified by the Choir of the Royal School of Church Music.

The second disc contains the full Merbecke Communion Service and is of particular importance to all persons interested in the liturgical music of the Epis-

copal Church. John Merbecke was a 16th century (he died at Windsor about 1585) English church musician and composer. He was the first one to set to music the English Liturgy as authorized by the Act of Uniformity of 1549.

We have from time to time called our readers' attention to certain of the very fine recordings that have been made available by the Royal School of Church Music. A complete list will be sent to anyone interested—just drop a card to the publishers of this bulletin asking for a list of the R.S.C.M. records.

Mozart: Requiem (Mass No. 20, K. 626). (Sung in Latin). Pia Tassinari (soprano), Ebe Stignani (mezzo-soprano), Ferruccio Tagliavini (tenor), Italo Tajo (bass), with Chorus and Orchestra of E. I. A. R. conducted by Victor de Sabata. 8-12" discs in album with booklet (automatic sequence). Cetra Set 101. \$15.70.

This set was reviewed in the April 1947 issue by Max de Schauensee, when the manual sequence copies were received. So many persons were disappointed at that time because the *Requiem* did not come in automatic sequence, that we are happy to be able to announce that copies are now available as described in the heading above.

Bach: St. Matthew Passion (complete). Tiana Lemnitz, Friedel Beckmann, Karl Erb, Gerhard Husch, Siegfried Schulze and St. Thomas' Choir and Gewandhaus Orchestra, Leipzig, conducted by Gunther Ramin. 16-12" discs in two albums (V-DB-9165 to V-DB-9172, V-DBS-9173, V-DB-9174 to V-DB-9180). \$40.69.

NOTE: This set was received too late for review this month. A review of it by Max de Schauensee will appear in our June issue.

ORGAN



Bach: Preludes and Fugues in A major, C major, and A minor. Carl Weinrich playing the organ in the residence of John Hausserman. 3-12" discs in album. Musicraft Set No. 80. \$4.05.

Musicraft has recently reissued a number of the Weinrich organ albums which were so popular before the war. The present set, however, is a new one recorded on the organ which was originally built for the Temple of Religion in the New York World's Fair and subsequently installed in the music room of John Hausserman, who had donated the instrument for the fair. It is a baroque organ of more than fifty ranks of pipes, but it does not sound very large or imposing. It is the kind of organ Weinrich seems to favor for Bach and the type on which he won the favor of many critics and organ lovers in his previous records. We are numbered among the opposition which finds this sort of thing prosaic and hard

to take. Admittedly, the clarity of these performances is worth a lot and displays the music well; but the music lacks warmth and color, which after all is worth something, too. The mechanics and the pleasing beauties of the music should both be represented, in our opinion. Better examples, we believe, are some of Biggs later records.

The "Great" A minor Prelude and Fugue is heard frequently, but has been recorded only a couple of times. At present, the fugue only is available by Schweitzer in a very ponderous reading. Weinrich does not give an ideal performance, for he misses some of its remarkable rhythmic vitality; however, it is generally good and is the best available. The others, in A major and C major, are played studiously, and will lead many to conclude "so what?" rather than "that was exhilarating and inspiring." The reproduction mirrors the thinness of the organ and supplements it with somewhat noisy surfaces, which will not disturb organ students, but should be considered by others. S.

Casson: The Clockmaker's Serenade. One side, and Myers—arr. Engleman: **Fairy on the Clock.** Reginald Foort playing his Möller Concert Organ. 1-10" disc (V-BD-1086). \$1.42

These little selections are pure novelties and Reginald Foort makes the most of his opportunity to make them mighty attractive. The children will love them and they should bring pleasant smiles to the faces of the grown-ups, too. Mr. Foort, who is the most popular movie palace organist in England, is an artist at just such things and he is in top form in these recordings.

Franck: Chorale No. 3 in A minor. Fernando Germani playing the organ in Westminster Cathedral, London. 2-12" discs (V-C-3580 and V-C-3581). \$3.99.

Germani's playing of the lovely Franck *A minor Chorale* is most enjoyable and satisfying. He imparts strength and nobility to a work that is frequently distorted and over-romanticised. The Westminster Cathedral organ sounds marvelous, both in the solo passages and in the full organ sections. The reproduction is as fine as any organ recording could be, of very wide range, perfect balance and clarity. They have succeeded in getting solo stops to sound free and clear and also in keeping tutti effects clear and free of blasting and muddiness. It's quite a remarkable job, and this magnificent instrument deserves it.

The exquisite *cantabile* section of the *A minor Chorale* is its chief glory. All three of the Franck *Chorales* are masterly developments of the large variation form of the later Beethoven, and they remain important cornerstones of the organ repertoire. Francks' organ works, while small in number, were vitally important because they appeared when organ music was at a low ebb, consisting largely of the

insipid pieces of Batiste and Lefébure-Wély. Franck's works provided the foundation for the brilliant school of French organ composition which followed him. We who love organ music, consider it a blessing when such superlative recordings as the above set are made available, and eagerly await the next issue. S.

Popular Organ Solos. Don Baker (playing the organ of the Paramount Theatre, New York City). 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set C-137. \$3.90

If you like organ music in the movie palace style, you'll go for this album in a big way. Don Baker uses all of the stops in this series of fourteen selections—he is all over the immense organ of the Paramount Theatre. Some of the pieces he plays are: *Tea for Two*; *Deep Night*; *Begin the Beguine*; *Jalousie*; *Body and Soul* and *I Love a Parade*.

VIOLIN



Kreisler: Caprice Viennois, Op. 2, One side, and **Kreisler: Recitative and Scherzo-Caprice, Op. 6.** Zino Francescatti (violin) accompanied by Artur Balsam (piano). 1-12" disc (C-72516D). \$1.25.

It would seem that Francescatti is attempting to out-Kreisler Kreisler on this disc. Whether he does or not will be up to each listener to decide. We doubt if the dyed-in-the-wool Kreisler fan will think that he has accomplished his apparent aim.

Suk: Four Pieces, Op. 17. Ginette Neveu (violin) with piano accompaniments by Jean Neveu. 2-12" discs (V-11-9840 and V-12-0154). \$2.50.

(This annotation is reprinted from the September, 1947 issue. It appeared in this place when the imported recording of this work was reviewed.)

Seldom does A. R. writing in *The Gramophone* (London) wax as enthusiastic as he did in his review of this pair of discs. He said:

" This music is tuneful, fresh, and expressive and it is played by the Neveu sister and brother with a fire and a brilliance, backed up by magnificent recording, which make this issue by far the most exciting thing that has come my way this month.

"The third number, based on a theme that resembles the Volga boatman's song, is the most beautiful, and the last, a sort of *motu perpetuo*, the most brilliant, but every one of the pieces has its attractions.

"With an excellent balance between violin and piano, and recording of the most realistic kind, I prophesy that these superb performances will make the sensation which they deserve."

If this recording completely satisfies A. R., and it would seem that it does from the above quotation, we are pretty sure that it will satisfy our readers

who are interested in music of this character, and so we thus recommend it.

Just in case you may have forgotten, Josef Suk was a pupil and son-in-law of Dvořák. Very little of his rather large output has been recorded.

PIANO



Schumann: Scenes of Childhood, Op. 15 ("Kinderscenen"). Maryla Jonas (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-290. \$3.50.

There is something very exquisite about Maryla Jonas' playing in this charming little album. The simplicity of these Schumann pieces is in itself a challenge to anyone who attempts to play them really beautifully.

Schumann composed his *Scenes of Childhood* in 1838, during one of the happier and more productive periods of his tragic life. At this time Schumann, who later was to know the horrors of mental illness, wrote: "Often I feel such a compulsion to compose that, even if I were on a lonely island in the middle of the sea, I couldn't stop. . . . It makes me altogether happy, this art." Poor Schumann!—his brief happiness is indeed apparent in these lovely little pieces with their feeling of alternate buoyancy and relaxation.

Most famous of the thirteen pieces that constitute *Scenes of Childhood*, is the seventh—*Traumerei*—known all over the world where Western civilization exists. The last piece, *The Poet Speaks*, contains the affecting melody we are familiar with from the song, *Widmung*.

Mme. Jonas is said to have played this suite in the first piano recital she ever gave, when she was nine years old. It is evident that she was anxious to record this music for she plays it with meticulous care and deep poetic feeling. Her pianissimo playing is a thing of beauty.

Recording is excellent, but record surfaces are still bothersome. Two of these four sides had a decided "swish."

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Tchaikovsky: Scherzo à la Russe, Op. 1. Leo Smit (piano). 1-12" disc in envelope. Concert Hall Society AP. \$2.63.

We might mention at the outset that, from a reproduction standpoint, this Concert Hall Society recording is an outstanding achievement; we cannot recall a record that contains finer piano reproduction.

The *Scherzo à la Russe* dates from 1867 and is one of two short pieces that make up Tchaikovsky's first published work. It is practically unknown in this country, and until recently there has not been an American edition of it available. Leeds Music Corporation has just published it edited by the brilliant young pianist, Leo Smit, who plays it so effectively

upon the present disc.

Edward Tatnall Canby in his glowing notes that accompany this recording says among other things:

"The work (*Scherzo à la Russe*) displays a dashing, muscular piano virtuosity, dazzling in its effect, that bespeaks the brashness of enormously gifted youth, an exuberant lavishness in musical ideas; a freshness, a vigor that might be said to be characteristic of the opus 1 stage in a musician's life.

"It forecasts the later great works for orchestra. The characteristic Russian tinge to the vigorous opening melody suggests numerous themes of his 'middle' period, when the inclination towards Russian folk music in him was at its strongest. The shifting harmonies, the brilliant counterpoint, the stunning effective climaxes, all bring to mind the more familiar works of Tchaikovsky's later years."

This seems a lot to say about a little piece that even the most devout Tchaikovsky admirers probably know little or nothing about; however, Mr. Smit makes it sound pretty impressive and we wouldn't be surprised to see this record enjoy very wide popularity.

This disc is made of a fine quality nonbreakable plastic.

Bach—arr. Busoni: Toccata, Adagio, and Fugue in C (Peters Vol. III, No. 6). Alexander Borovsky (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Vox Set No. 193. \$3.15.

Old timers will remember this famous old Polydor recording, which created such a stir when copies of it reached this country from Germany. It was famous for the fidelity of the piano reproduction and for the fine performance of Alexander Borovsky. Vox secured the masters from abroad and are offering it this month on discs manufactured in this country. As it stands up very well with recordings that are being made today, it is well worth investigating.

CHILDREN



Wilder: The Churkendoose. Ray Bolger with supporting cast and orchestra conducted by Mitchell Miller. 1-12" disc in folder (D-DU-90006). \$2.10.

This is a very unusual record for children (ages 3 to 10); it tells a fascinating story of the Churkendoose, which is part chicken, part turkey, part duck and part goose, and is despised by the other barnyard creatures because he is so different from any of them. He is so homely that he scares away the fox and saves their lives, and then they realize that he is really not so ugly—he is only different—and they take him into their companionship and all ends happily. It is an amusing story that teaches the little folks a fundamental lesson in democracy—those who

are not of the same race, nationality, or religion are not ugly—they are only different. All of us should adjust ourselves to the difference, and if we will, we can all get along quite happily together.

Ray Bolger, with aid of a supporting cast and suitable sound effects, puts the story over in a lively fashion and will doubtless hold the interest of the little ones from the first word to the final happy climax.

Tubby the Tuba. Danny Kaye (speaking and singing) with Victor Young and his Concert Orchestra. 1-12" disc in folder. Decca CU-106. \$2.10.

Over a year ago the original recording of *Tubby the Tuba* with Victor Jory as the narrator was released by Coemo. It was a set of two 10-inch discs in an album. It created a real sensation and soon became the biggest selling children's set on the market. Since that time it has appeared over the air and has been featured by many symphony orchestras in their concerts for children.

This month Decca makes it available on one 12-inch unbreakable disc contained in an illustrated envelope. Danny Kaye tells the story and sings part of it in his inimitable fashion. It's a great performance and we are sure the children will go for it in a big way.

If perchance you do not know the story of Tubby, here it is briefly. The characters in the story are the various instruments in a symphony orchestra, and the plot hinges on the sadness of the tuba because he never has any pretty melodies to play—nothing but oompah . . . oompah. Discouraged and downcast after the evening concert, he goes down to the river and becomes acquainted with a frog who teaches him a "beeoofiful" tune. The next day at rehearsal Tubby plays his tune for his fellow players and they are most enthusiastic about it and each of them plays it on his own instrument and then the whole orchestra plays it in concert and everybody is happy—especially Tubby the Tuba. AND here is the secret of the whole recording—our young listeners will learn the various instruments of the orchestra and how they sound without knowing that that is the fundamental idea of this album. Shhh! Don't you dare to tell them.

Prokofieff: The Ugly Duckling. Leon Lishner (baritone) with YPR Symphony Orchestra conducted by Walter Hendl. 2-10" discs in folder. Young People's Record Set. \$3.15.

We note that the editor has listed this recording as one for children. It would be a very erudite child indeed who could appreciate this work of Prokofieff. We note on the face of the folder that it is stated that this composition is by the same composer as "Peter and the Wolf." Of course, this is true, but it is certainly misleading. The two compositions are no more alike than the ugly duckling and the beautiful swan, although they both stem

from the same father.

Prokofieff's *The Ugly Duckling* is an interesting work, but one that can only be appreciated by mature music lovers. It is more or less a long recitative which tells the familiar Hans Christian Andersen story with an appropriate musical background.

Mr. Lishner gives a highly satisfactory performance and he is well supported by an adequate orchestra under the able direction of Walter Hendl. The recording has been nicely accomplished on non-breakable discs with silent surfaces.



DICTION

Carroll: Alice in Wonderland. Eva Le Gallienne, Margaret Webster, Richard Waring, Hugh Franklin, Bambi Linn and Members of the Original New York Production. Original music by Richard Addinsell. Orchestra conducted by Tibor Kozma. 6-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set K-13. \$7.25.

Several recordings of *Alice in Wonderland* have appeared before this one but we are very sure that the present version is by far the best in every way. It is based on the stage adaptation by Eva Le Gallienne and Florida Freibus with original music by Richard Addinsell. The same superb cast that appeared on Broadway has made this recording. It makes the beloved story come to life in a very real way and the sound effects and the lovely music add much to its charm. Here is a delightful gift for any little child and one that the grown-ups cannot help enjoying, too.

The action of the play is fully described with numerous pictures on a leaflet that is bound in this fascinating album. The recording was done with utmost care and the reproduction throughout is of the best.

What Is Choral Speaking?—explanation and illustration. College of Chestnut Hill Verse Speaking Choir conducted by Miriam Davenport Gow. 1-10" disc (NCS-505). \$1.84.

Cary: To a Honey Bee and Coolbrith: In Blossom Time and Hillyer: Lullaby. One side, and **Longfellow: Bells of Lynn and Guiney: Wild Ride.** College of Chestnut Hill Verse Speaking Choir conducted by Miriam Davenport Gow. 1-10" disc (NCS-503). \$1.84.

There seems to be a growing interest in "Choral Speaking." Classes in this art are being formed in many of our schools, and as it is practically a new subject, any help that the instructors and students may receive is probably very welcome. Miriam Davenport Gow, a pioneer in this field, and the very successful conductor of the Verse Speaking Choir of

the College of Chestnut Hill, has prepared the discs listed above. The first record contains a brief but informative explanation of the art of choral speaking, with some examples, and the second record contains further examples.

The Misadventures of 'Erbert and Sam Small. Pat O'Malley ("The Lancashire Lad") (monologue) with piano accompaniment. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set 618. \$4.05.

We can't hand this one much. To our mind, the stories that Mr. O'Malley tells on these discs are rather cheap imitations of the really quaint, and always clean ones, that the famous English humorist, Stanley Holloway, recorded for English Columbia. Such stories, if they are really clever, do not have to depend upon sly and rather coarse innuendos.

For the real thing, compare the present recordings with those by Holloway in the current domestic Columbia catalog; especially record C-55020 containing *The Lion and Albert* and *Three Ha'Pence a Foot*.

MISCELLANEOUS



Nurnberg Trial (Excerpts). 5-12" discs in album. Epoch Set. \$12.50.

From the notes that accompany these records we learn that the entire trial at Nurnberg was recorded. The discs in this unique album contain scattering excerpts dubbed from the original recordings. On them will be heard the voices of Goering, Hess, Ribbentrop, Schacht and their fellow defendants, the voices of the Allied Prosecutors, the voice and gavel of the Presiding Judge, and the general noises of the courtroom. It is all quite realistic.

Unquestionably this album has considerable historic value, and is an item that should find a proper place in the libraries of our various educational institutions.

Bach—tr. Segovia: **Chaconne**. Three sides, and **Bach**—tr. Segovia: **Gavotte for Lute**. Andres Segovia (guitar). 2-12" discs in album. Musicraft Set 85. \$3.

These Bach transcriptions that Segovia has made, and plays so beautifully on these discs, will doubtless be most acceptable to his host of admirers. Recordings by this great guitarist appear only occasionally, but now that he is appearing under the Musicraft label perhaps we will see them more often. We hope so. The reproduction and the record surfaces are satisfactory.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$9.75.

The Concert Companion. By Robert Bagar and Louis Biancolli with an introduction by Deems Taylor. xi + 868 pp. Whittlesey House (New York). Price \$7.50.

The Art of Judging Music. By Virgil Thomson. x+318+xviii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$4.25.

The Other Side of the Record. By Charles O'Connell. xi+332+xi pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.50.

Koussevitzky. By Moses Smith. 400 pp. Allen, Towne, and Heath, Inc. (New York). Price \$4.

Metropolitan Opera Annals: A Chronicle of Artists and Performances. Compiled by William H. Seltsam. Introduction by Edward Johnson. xvi+751 pp. The H. W. Wilson Co. (New York). Price \$7.

Records for Pleasure. By John Ball, Jr., ix+214 pp. Rutgers University Press (New Brunswick, N. J.). Price \$2.50.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CA—Co. Art, CE—Cetra, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CT—Concertone, D—Decca, DI—Disc, GIO—Gregorian Inst. of America, HU—Harvard Film Service, HW—Hargail, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, L—London Gramophone, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, OK—Okch, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Schrimer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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RECORDINGS from time to time reach into fields that are far removed from music. For example, Columbia has recently made available an album of four records demonstrating, with commentaries, an inclusive series of heart sounds. These records were originally prepared and have been newly revised under the direction of George D. Geckeler, M. D., Associate Professor of Medicine in charge of Cardiology at Hahnemann Medical College and Hospital, Philadelphia.

The importance of these records as aids in diagnosis and instruction cannot be over-estimated. Here, within one album of records, are reproduced and defined a comprehensive group of authentic Heart Sounds, Murmurs and Arrhythmias. Since almost all types of auscultatory findings are included, these records become important as references, also. Moreover, specific types of abnormalities are presented and described, with frequent use of a normal for comparison. Spoken commentaries serve as an aid in identification and demonstration.

The unique feature of these records is that they have been built for use with a stethoscope. One simply holds the chest piece in his hand and listens. By this means many extraneous noises are eliminated and the sounds are very like those heard with a stethoscope on a patient's chest.

These records were developed to be played with a moderately priced phonograph in one's own living room. It is not recommended that they be played in a large auditorium unless it is satisfactorily acousticed and unless the loud speaker system is built for low pitched sounds.

This set of recordings is known as "Stethoscopic Heart Records," and is Columbia Set M-735. Price \$8.

A Dictionary of Musical Themes. Compiled by Harold Barlow and Sam Morgenstern with an introduction by John Erskine. xiii + 656 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

As one stops to consider what has been accomplished by Messrs. Barlow and Morgenstern in the compilation of this volume, it would seem that a lifetime would not be quite long enough for the great task. However, they have accomplished the work they set out to do, and the book is available for use. Over 10,000 themes and over 250 composers are included in this fascinating work. Some composers are represented by fifty or more compositions and some compositions contain twenty or more themes. In considering compositions to be included, the basis established was to include all instrumental works that had been recorded (it was felt that by this time record companies had very fully covered all music of any great importance). Just in passing, it is reported that the indefatigable team of Barlow and Morgenstern are already at work on a similar dictionary devoted to vocal compositions.

The present volume is divided into two parts. The first part contains the themes written in the usual musical notations—these are numbered and alphabetically arranged by composers. The second part is the notation-index or theme finder. To identify a theme (melody) that is running through your head, you pick it out on the white keys of a piano and note the name of the keys, then you refer to the theme finder and it will give you the number of the theme which will be found in the first section of this unique book. At first this may seem rather difficult and not wholly practicable, but the erudite John Erskine, in his introduction, states that it is; we are not very smart but we

traced a few themes by the method indicated without too much trouble.

We believe that this book will be of real value to both professional and amateur musicians, and considering its scope, and the immense amount of research that was necessary to produce it, its price is very modest indeed. Most things may be over-priced today, but certainly not *A Dictionary of Musical Themes*.

* * *

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues published during the last sixteen years are available. The price is 5c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 125 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

ORCHESTRA



Milhaud: Symphony No. 1. Seven sides, and **Milhaud: In Memoriam** (from "Two Marches"). Columbia Broadcasting Symphony conducted by Darius Milhaud. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-704. \$6.

Another distinguished phonographic first brings us Darius Milhaud conducting his *First Symphony*, the composer's initial venture in this form, although he has written prolifically in nearly every other form. Composed in 1939, when he was forty-seven years old, Milhaud did this work on commission from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra as part of its fiftieth anniversary celebration.

The work is in four movements, and is typical of Milhaud from first bar to last. Anyone familiar with his style could identify it at once as Milhaud's work. The spontaneous, almost improvised, character is evident all through the symphony, and its instrumentation is the clear and rather simple type he employs. This work is not quite as easy to grasp in one or two hearings as the *Suite Française* and some other lighter works. A few repeated playings do reveal more shape and substance than we hear at first. We doubt that this work will ever achieve great popularity or rank with the great symphonies of the masters, but that is no indictment against it. Those who enjoy contemporary music and like Milhaud's works will find this quite to their taste. For all others we advise hearing this work before buying it, and in all fairness hear it several times.

Whenever a composer conducts his own work it is assumed that the performance is authentic, and as we have never heard anyone but Milhaud direct it, we can only say this must be a good exposition of it.

The orchestra is the competent one heard so often on the air, and the reproduction is first rate throughout—including some resonance (probably Liederkrantz Hall). S.

Britten: Peter Grimes—Four Sea Interludes. Four sides, and **Britten: Peter Grimes**—Passacaglia. Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Eduard van Beinum. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-50. \$7.35.

When *Peter Grimes*—the outstanding event of the recent Metropolitan Opera season—was first given in New York on February 12, even those few who found fault with the opera conceded that the various orchestral interludes connecting the several scenes, were among the finest things in this controversial score.

Here we have four *Sea Interludes* and the *Passacaglia*, from Benjamin Britten's opera, beautifully played by the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam, conducted by Eduard van Beinum.

These are mood-paintings, music which is modern and yet cannot offend the ears of those who dislike formless cacophony. The opening *Dawn* is a broad majestic evocation of the sea with occasional rippling figurations on the harp which convey the spray of the waves. There is a jaunty primness to the Georgian proprieties of *Sunday Morning*, and a sense of well-being. *Moonlight* paints a grave, contemplative mood, while *Storm* has all the blustery heartiness and turbulent vigor of the British seascape painter.

The *Passacaglia*, which makes use of a ground base, is written with economy and adroitness. It is a sombre piece emphasizing the morbid, violent character of Britten's opera.

As far as one can gather, this is the only music so far recorded from *Peter Grimes*. It makes an excellent beginning, for it is most beautifully accomplished, the *ffrr* Decca technique making the high strings sound particularly gleaming. Details on harp and woodwinds stand out with extraordinary clarity. Both recording and the glassy-smooth surfaces transcend anything in the way of technical accomplishment that has appeared in this country thus far.

MAX DE SCHAUSENSE.

Strauss: Ein Heldenleben, Op. 40. Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-748. \$7.25.

We cannot feel that the need for a new recording of *Ein Heldenleben* is acute; however, as seven years have elapsed since the last one appeared, we suppose another is due. We are thankful the new one is so excellent, for then there is at least some reason for its appearance. Fritz Reiner made his acquaintance with this score with its composer, Richard Strauss, in Dresden a number of years ago, and is therefore

highly qualified to present an authoritative reading. Reiner is always good in Strauss (and many other composers), and in the present set, we have him in fine form. This reading does not seem to be as noisy, bombastic, or enormous in conception as some we have heard, but it seems to be much more carefully thought out as a whole. Reiner seems more conscious of the program of the score and less interested in driving the heavily scored episodes. We might say it is brains instead of brawn. This reading will unquestionably bear repeated hearings with greater pleasure than the more superficial performances. It is a noble and thoughtful job. The Pittsburgh Orchestra comes through with flying colors, the horns being notably excellent in their many prominent passages. There is good tone in the louder sections of the music and the excitement is musical rather than clang-ing.

About seven years ago, when the Rodzinski-Cleveland recording of *Ein Heldenleben* (Col. MM-441) was released, this reviewer was hard pressed to state a preference between it and the then recent Ormandy-Philadelphia set (Vic. DM-610)—both were considered so excellent. The choice at this time becomes more detailed, and we will solve it simply by stating that this newest set seems a more valid interpretation, as well as the best reproduction. S.

Handel—arr. Harty: **Water Music Suite**. Four sides, and **Handel: Concerto Grosso No. 21 in D minor, Op. 6, No. 10**. Three sides, and **Handel: Xerxes**—Largo. Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Désiré Defauw. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1208. \$6.

There is no conductor living today who cannot take valuable lessons from the Hamilton Harty recording of the *Water Music* (Col. MX-13). Not only did Harty make a superlative arrangement of six selected movements, but he made an absolutely definitive recording bursting with spirit and enthusiasm and abounding in grace and style. It is also surprisingly satisfactory reproduction, even by today's standards.

We salute Defauw for using Harty's arrangement and not some other one, which mistake Stokowski and Ormandy made by using orchestrations of their own. But as for Defauw's reading of the score, it is easily the remotest approach to the spirit of the music that we can imagine. In none of the six movements does he begin to compare with Harty. The style is just not there, and his tempi are uniformly slow and dull. Ormandy's set (Col. MX-279) released last year is somewhat nearer to the right idea; and Cameron's set (EDA-38), reviewed this past January, is a great deal closer to the real thing. But Harty remains supreme in this music, which is one of the loveliest things we know. If you want to hear a fine work by Defauw, try his set of *The Birds* by Respighi (Vic. DM-1112), a constant source of delight.

As one must perforce accept a worthless four sides of *Water Music*, the merits of the *Concerto Grosso* are hardly worth detailed discussion. Suffice it to say that anyone greatly in need of this particular item may purchase the singles of it from the complete set, superbly performed by the Busch Chamber Players. From Handel's *limited* output (of about ninety-seven volumes) a rarity was selected for the last side of this album—Largo! S.

Stravinsky: Le Baiser de la Fée—Divertimento. RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by Igor Stravinsky. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1202. \$4.75.

The suite from the allegorical ballet *The Fairy's Kiss*, which Stravinsky entitled *Divertimento*, contains about a third of the complete score. Based on Hans Christian Andersen's "The Ice Maiden," this ballet is also based on Tchaikovsky's music. Composed in commemoration of the 35th anniversary of Tchaikovsky's death, Stravinsky used music from various songs and piano compositions by the romantic master. While the music is built of borrowed material, Stravinsky has worked it in his own fashion, and this suite is far from an arrangement of familiar melodies. In fact, the characteristic Tchaikovskian style, as we usually think of it, is missing. But Stravinsky has done an adroit job of taking these themes and treating them in his style, constructing an entirely original work. It is unmistakably Stravinsky, yet it seems to us to have a peculiar charm unlike his other works.

The ballet is in four tableaux; music from the first three are included in this *Divertimento*. The first two sides are devoted to a Sinfonia from the first tableau while the next two sides contain Swiss Dances from the second tableau. The third tableau depicts wedding preparations, and the music in this suite is entitled Scherzo. The fourth section of the *Divertimento* (also from the wedding tableau of the ballet) is the Pas de Deux, a splendid and elaborate piece of music.

The reproduction is of the clear unresonant type well suited to this music. Stravinsky directs a Victor assembled orchestra, presumably Californian, which performs expertly. Although the Pas de Deux has been recorded previously, this is the first complete recording of the *Divertimento*, a worthy addition to the recorded repertoire. S.

Ibert: Divertissement. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1199. \$3.50.

You will thoroughly enjoy this amusing trifle if you have a sense of humor and can appreciate a clever composer having some fun with a few ideas borrowed from more serious music. Ibert, with Gallic finesse, has cleverly constructed a short six-section work in a satirical vein. It opens with a bright Introduction, followed by a Nocturne, which provides

the most serious moments of the suite. Next is a Cortège that openly mocks the pompous and pretentious ceremonial type of procession, including a brief quotation from the well known "Wedding March." This section is extremely clever, as is the Valse which follows. The Valse is something of a travesty on The Blue Danube and The Rosenkavalier Waltz and other items from the ballet and dance world. Whatever was left undone in the Cortège is accounted for in the next section, Parade. Parade is also sly and cynical and, of course, effective. A Finale brings this suite to a jovial conclusion.

The present set consists of the same records previously issued by Victor as numbers 11951/2 and contained in album DM-324 (which also housed the MacDowell Second Concerto). The reproduction is still very effective and Fiedler's brilliant performance of the *Divertissement* is too well known to require comment. This is the only domestic recording ever made of the *Divertissement*; however, Ibert conducted one a number of years ago in Europe. Although the notes accompanying the album do not so state, an encyclopedia indicates this suite was drawn from the musical comedy "Le Chapeau de Paille d'Italie." We recommend this set highly, particularly for summer listening. S.

R. Strauss: Suite from Der Rosenkavalier. The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-742. \$4.75.

In this album we have one of the most delightful recordings that we have heard in a long time. The music from *Der Rosenkavalier* is pleasingly tuneful and anyone may easily enjoy it. The present Suite was arranged by the composer himself, and as it is here presented by the Philadelphia Orchestra under the direction of Eugene Ormandy (who, by the way, is an ideal interpreter of Richard Strauss' music), it becomes an item that should have a very wide appeal. Columbia has supplied excellent reproduction throughout.

The Hallé Orchestra under Barbirolli made a recording of the present Suite a number of years ago for HMV; and the RCA Victor catalog contains a Suite from this popular Strauss opera arranged by Antal Dorati, recorded by the Cincinnati Symphony directed by Eugene Goossens. We are rather sure that you will find the new Ormandy version superior to either of these.

Mozart: Symphony No. 32 in G, K. 318. B. B. C. Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6172). \$2.63.

Some musicologists think that the present work was written as an overture for an opera; perhaps one that was never produced. However, whether it is a short symphony or an extended overture is not too important today. The important thing is that it is a very

lovely work and has been most beautifully recorded by the B.B.C. Symphony under the distinguished direction of Sir Adrian Boult.

Collectors of Mozart recordings will find this little known work a worthy addition to their libraries.

Waxman: The Paradine Case—A Symphonic Poem for Piano and Orchestra (based on music from the film). Symphony Orchestra conducted by Franz Waxman, with Edward Rebner (piano). 2-10" discs in album. Alco Set A-10. \$2.89.

We believe that most persons will agree that the music that Franz Waxman has supplied for the Selznick film "The Paradine Case" is well above average; and, therefore, the symphonic poem for piano and orchestra that the composer has written based upon that music is worthy of being recorded. Alco has secured an adequate orchestra, and with Edward Rebner at the piano and the composer on the podium a highly successful recording has been achieved, which should be of interest to all music lovers whether they are movie fans or not.

Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 6 in B flat major. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1211. \$4.75.

With this album, RCA Victor has issued recordings of all of the Brandenburg Concertos (except No. 1) by Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony. The present recording follows the general style of the earlier releases, which were found highly satisfactory by a majority of the critics. It was recorded at Tanglewood during August, 1947. In this work there is featured a concertino for two violas, which in the present instance is very nicely accomplished by Joseph de Pasquale and Jean M. Cauhape.

Franz Lehar Waltzes. Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra conducted by Franz Lehar. 3-12" discs in album. London Set LA-10. \$7.35.

In this album we have the opportunity of hearing three famous Lehar waltzes conducted by the composer; although Mr. Lehar is approaching eighty (he as born in 1870), one would never guess it when he hears the gay spirit that is infused in these fine recordings.

The following waltzes are included in this album: *Eva*; *The Count of Luxemburg*; and *Gold and Silver*.

Sullivan: Iolanthe—Overture. Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 1-12" disc (C-72526D). \$1.25.

In view of the fact that Sir Malcolm Sargent was for many years conductor of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company there is no question about this recording being in the proper tradition. The present disc is a

very pleasant one, and one that anyone may enjoy. Reproduction—excellent.

Yradier—arr. Kell: **La Paloma**. One side, and **The Snowy Breasted Pearl** (trad.—arr. Blegard). Reginald Kell and his orchestra. 1-10" disc (L-R-10007). \$1.05.

The celebrated English clarinetist, Reginald Kell, has surrounded himself with a small group of competent players and presents these well-known melodies in what might be termed the "quiet manner." Restful music with which to relax—delightfully played and nicely recorded!

Moussorgsky: Khovantschina—Dances of the Persian Slaves (Act IV). Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (V-12-0239). \$1.25.

A modern recording of this orchestral selection from Moussorgsky's *Khovantschina* has been needed for a long time. Sir Thomas supplies it, and it is worthy of the investigation of any collector who is interested in this music. Reproduction—excellent.

Offenbach: Orphée aux Enfers—Overture. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-12-0240). \$1.25.

Another recording is here offered of the overture to Offenbach's opera *Orpheus in Hades*, and a perfectly splendid one—a worthy addition to the repertory of recorded music. The disc should enjoy wide popularity with all classes of music lovers.

Anderson: Fiddle Fiddle. Kingsway Symphony Orchestra conducted by Camarata. One side, and **Chopin: Impromptu No. 4 in C sharp minor, Op. 66** ("Fantasie-Impromptu"). Kingsway Symphony Orchestra conducted by Camarata, featuring Arthur Gleghorn (flute) and Reginald Kell (clarinet). 1-10" disc (L-R-10006). \$1.05.

Spirited and tuneful selections played with taste, featuring the able soloists Arthur Gleghorn (flute) and Reginald Kell (clarinet). Reproduction—excellent.

Rossini: William Tell—Overture. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 2-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-293. \$2.90.

And here is another recording of the overture from *William Tell!* However, Kostelanetz does a pretty good job, and this version should be considered if you plan to add this well-known piece to your library.

Waldteufel Waltzes. Ronnie Munro and his orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. London Set LA-12. \$3.94.

An album of fascinating Waldteufel Waltzes nicely played by Ronnie Munro and his orchestra, recorded

in England by Decca, has been imported and released in this country by The London Gramophone Corp. (New York). If you like music of this character, you'll find this album very much to your taste.

The waltzes in this album are: *Estudiantina*; *Les Sirenes*; *Grenadiers*; *Dolores*; *Mon Rêve*; *Très Jolie*; *Espana*; and *The Skaters*.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Brahms: Trio No. 3 in C minor, Op. 101. Trio di Trieste. (Dario de Rosa—piano; Renato Zanetovitch—violin; Libero Lana—violoncello). 3-12" discs in album. (V-C-7694 to V-C-7696) (Automatic sequence). \$5.99.

Many music lovers feel that of the three trios Brahms wrote for violin, violoncello and piano, the present one, the third, is the most important, and, we might mention, it is the only one that is not listed in the current domestic catalogs. It would seem, therefore, that this fine recording by the Trio di Trieste is of especial interest.

This work is pure Brahms—one may easily imagine the great composer himself sitting at the piano with his head thrown back, his flashing eyes, and his distinguished beard pointing over the music on the rack. It is surely too bad that recording came too late to have caught such performances. However, the music has come down to us, and with such recordings as the present one, we may hear it beautifully played whenever we have the desire.

It is lovely, pleasing music, and certainly easy to listen to. We cannot help wondering why the domestic companies have passed it by, especially, after the immense sales that attended RCA Victor's recording of the *Trio No. 1 in B major, Op. 8*, which was made by Rubinstein, Heifetz, and Feuermann.

Brahms: Sonata No. 2 in F major, Op. 99. Seven sides, and **Nardini**—arr. Salmon: **Lento** (from "Sonata in C major"). Gregor Piatigorsky (violoncello) and Ralph Berkowitz (piano). 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-590. \$6.

Now that the fine recording of this important, although not too well-known work, by Pablo Casals and Mieczyslaw Horszowski, which RCA Victor issued about ten years ago, is no longer available, the present album is particularly of value. Piatigorsky and Berkowitz do an excellent piece of work and the reproduction is of the best.

The present sonata is the second of the two which Brahms wrote for violoncello and piano. It is the product of this composer's maturity, and is representative of the best of his chamber works. It will be welcomed by all those who have learned to understand and appreciate the rugged quality of his compositions—that same quality which made it so difficult for his contemporaries to value properly the

work of this truly great composer. In fact, it has only been within recent years that the proper standing of Brahms as a composer has been generally appreciated, and this largely through the repeated playing of his symphonies. Such recordings as the present one cannot help bringing about a better understanding of his chamber music.

Brahms: Quintet in B minor, Op. 115. Alfred Gallodoro (clarinet) with Stuyvesant String Quartet. 4-12" discs in album. International Set MI-303. \$5.25.

To our mind this is one of Brahms' finest works in the field of chamber music; it is a mature work and truly representative of that great composer. About ten years ago, RCA Victor released a recording of it by the Busch Quartet and Reginald Kell (clarinet). It enjoyed wide popularity among the discerning lovers of chamber music, and we do not believe that this new rendition by the present artists is in any way superior. The Stuyvesant Quartet with Gallodoro (clarinet) are able players and give a fine well-thought-out performance, but the recording is nothing to boast about, and when a comparison is made with the older version it is our opinion that most persons will choose the latter.

The Busch recording is still listed in the latest RCA Victor catalog but we understand that it is not generally available. Thus it may not be possible to make the comparison that we have indicated, in which case the new version will probably be entirely satisfactory. The work itself should be in every representative library of recorded chamber music; there is no doubt about that.

CONCERTO



Ravel: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra (1932). Leonard Bernstein (pianist-conductor) with the Philharmonia Orchestra of London. Five sides, and **Bernstein: Seven Anniversaries**—For Paul Bowles (4); In Memoriam: Nathalie Koussevitzky (5). Leonard Bernstein (piano). 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1209. \$4.75. (Also available in Vinylite, DV-15, \$7.)

Ravel is said to have been very much pleased with this *Piano Concerto*, and thought he had expressed himself most completely in it. His biographers consider it one of his greatest masterpieces. But the public chooses what it can absorb most easily, and the *Bolero*, *Pavane*, *Daphnis*, and *La Valse* characterize Ravel to the vast majority of music lovers. The *Piano Concerto* is in three movements, the first being quite breezy and at times jazzy. The second movement, in contrast, is quiet and songful and built on conventional lines. The third movement, a *presto*, is entirely influenced by jazz, and is a vivacious, syncopated affair that characterizes Ravel as he no doubt wished

to be. But how many of us imagine we would like to be something entirely unlike ourselves? At least that thought kept haunting us each time we played this music. We believe the public's opinion of Ravel from his *Daphnis*, *La Valse*, etc., is more valid than Ravel's own opinion of himself.

Leonard Bernstein tackles this music with obvious relish and muscular ability, quieting down dutifully for the second movement. The performance is of a different character from the previous, and much older, one by Marguerite Long with Ravel conducting the orchestra (Col. MM-176). The present one is so far superior in reproduction, however, that it is without doubt the preferable one, except for those who demand authenticity when available. The Philharmonia Orchestra, conducted by the soloist, is generally competent in this difficult score; the reproduction truly excellent. The two short pieces on the final side are thoughtful cameos that show Bernstein's control of piano tone to good advantage. S.

OPERA



Puccini: La Bohème (complete opera). Bidú Sayão (soprano), Richard Tucker (tenor), Salvatore Baccaloni (basso), Mimi Benzell (soprano), Francesco Valentino (baritone), George Cehanovsky (baritone), Lodovico Oliviero (tenor), Nicola Moscona (basso), and Lawrence Davidson, with Metropolitan Orchestra and Chorus directed by Giuseppe Antonicelli. 14-12" discs in two volumes with libretto. Columbia Set MOP-27. \$19.85.

This, the fourth complete electrical recording of Puccini's *La Bohème*, is also the first complete Italian opera ever recorded in America. Accomplished on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, with cast, conductor, orchestra and chorus from that distinguished house (which has presented 272 performances of Puccini's opera to date), these albums obviously emerge as a more or less historic occasion.

Considering all this, it is a pity that the performance is not a more distinguished or exciting one. What one hears is correct and careful and forthright, but there is nothing stellar or savoring of the virtuoso performance. Columbia's latest undertaking adds up to good routine. Fifty years from now this may be cited as an excellent example of an average performance at the Metropolitan during the late forties.

The present cast is headed by Bidú Sayão and Richard Tucker. This writer has never cared too much for Mme. Sayão's Mimi. Acknowledging that this artist is a singer of sensitivity and refinement, one is also forced to admit that she has never really had enough voice or abandon for the sweeping surges of this music.

Richard Tucker employs his dark, full voice in an enthusiastic and impassioned manner for the music

of Rodolfo, but one feels the lack of real authority of countless stage performances to back this up. There is little virtuosity in Mr. Tucker's singing and a pianissimo effect seems utterly incompatible with his kind of vocal emission. The first act *Racconto* is sung pitched down a half-tone, the B in the climax being more hollow than clarion. Also cleverly lowered a half-tone, on the phrase *v'aspettan gl'amici*, are the final measures of the love duet. The concluding high B is pushed beyond its natural beauty by the singers.

Mimi Benzell's thin, unsteady tones do not embellish Musetta's Waltz to its advantage. Here a much fuller, more brilliant voice might have been found. Nor does Musetta strike you as a personality, which she must.

Of the three other Bohemians, Nicola Moscona stands out easily as the best. His solid bass voice is good to hear, and his singing of the *Vecchia Zimarra* one of the better things in the new recording. Francesco Valentino's Marcello is colorless and his voice sounds muffled much of the time. George Cehanovsky, one of the Metropolitan's best known Schauendars, sings his music with experienced poise. Salvatore Baccaloni in the two roles of Benoit and Alcindoro seems underkeyed.

The Metropolitan Opera Chorus does nice work throughout, singing with verve and sparkle. The orchestra sounds as though it knew its business; so does the conductor, Giuseppe Antonicelli.

The actual recording is not all that it might be. Often the voices are not forward and sound muffled. This is particularly true when the entire cast is singing, as in the second act. The big climax of this act is not nearly exciting enough—this is illustrative of the whole performance.

The best complete *Bohème* available is the RCA Victor set with Gigli and Albanese (DMC-107). There is just no comparison, for here is saliently present what is lacking in the present set. One even prefers the old Columbia album, which featured the irrepressible Rosetta Pampanini and that fine tenor Luigi Marini.

However, Columbia's spirit in actually accomplishing what had not been done up until now—the complete recording of a standard Italian opera in America—is no mean feat and should make Victor and its highly publicized promises feel just a little silly.

MAX DE SCHAUNSEE.

Bizet: Carmen—Air de la Fleur (Act II). One side, and **Leoncavallo: I Pagliacci**—Vesti la Giubba (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with La Scala (Milan) Orchestra conducted by Franco Ghione. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6307). \$2.63.

Gigli fans, and their number is great in this country, will be delighted to know that the record listed above is now available. Copies of it were received in a recent shipment from abroad.

Donizetti: La Favorita—Anathème de Balthazar (Act II). One side, and **Adam: Le Châlet**—Chanson Militaire. (Sung in French). Marcel Journet (bass) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1026). \$2.50.

Donizetti: Linda di Chamounix—O luce di quest' anima (Act I). One side, and **Verdi: Ernani**—Ernani, involami (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Marcella Sembrich (soprano) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1027). \$2.50.

Verdi: Don Carlos—Per megiunto (Act IV). One side, and **Verdi: Rigoletto**—Monologo: Pari siamo! (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Titta Ruffo (baritone) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1028). \$2.50.

Massenet: Le Cid—O Souverain! O Juge! O Père! (Act III). (Sung in French). One side, and **Mascagni: Cavalleria Rusticana**—Addio alla madre. (Sung in Italian). Riccardo Martin (tenor) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1029). \$2.50.

Brüll: Das Goldene Kreuz—Wie anders war es! (Act II). (Sung in German). Otto Goritz (baritone) with orchestra. One side, and **Wagner: Tannhäuser**—Blick' ich umher (Act II). (Sung in German). Otto Goritz (baritone) with string quartet and harp accompaniment. 1-12" disc (V-15-1030). \$2.50.

The sixth and latest release of Victor's Heritage Series brings us selections by a world-famous soprano, a fine tenor, two baritones and a celebrated bass.

Marcella Sembrich (1858-1935), the great Polish coloratura, is now represented on red Vinylite by two arias, which are as good as any in her considerable list. They prove that if a singer has a phenomenal technique she can surmount all vocal difficulties when she is past 50. Undoubtedly Mme. Sembrich's voice, by the end of 1908, had lost much of its freshness and some of its ease and flexibility. Nevertheless, there are brilliant effects and silvery high tones of vibrant quality in these arias from *Linda di Chamounix* and *Ernani* which can still bring pleasure, and which also give a good idea of the art of one of the greatest singers of all time.

Titta Ruffo (1877-) was acclaimed for having the most powerful and brilliant baritone of his period, possibly of any period. You would hardly guess this from the two selections with which Signor Ruffo makes his Heritage Series bow. One would still have to believe, from the mouths of those who heard it, that this voice has not since been matched for the phenomenal vitality and volume of its tone. The *Don Carlos* selection is smoothly but tamely sung and is also recorded too high, giving Ruffo's naturally dark voice an almost tenory sound, while the song written by his brother, Ettore Titta, is pleasant but quite un-

interesting. Let us hope for representative selections (and they do exist) of this wonderful voice in a later issue.

Riccardo Martin (1879-) was the first of a long line of American tenors to assume a position of major importance at the Metropolitan. Between 1907 and 1913 Mr. Martin sang all the big roles of the Italian and French repertoire on the nights when Caruso didn't sing. A pupil of Jean de Reszke, Mr. Martin displays smooth and stylistic singing of the aria from Massenet's *Le Cid* (one of de Reszke's operas) which reflects this training. His voicing of the finale of *Cavalleria* is notable for the clarion ring of the upper notes.

Otto Goritz (1872-1929) sang character roles of the Wagnerian repertoire at the Metropolitan from 1903 to 1917. His voice was a high, bright baritone of rather unyielding character. His Alberich, his Beckmesser and Klingsor were fine "theater". Mr. Goritz does not possess the lyric accents for Wolfgram's *Eulogy of Love*. In these selections he emerges better in Bombardon's stanzas from Brüll's almost forgotten *Das Goldene Kreuz*.

Marcel Journet (1868-1933) is the first singer so far honored by the Heritage Series in having four solo selections listed. This is Mr. Journet's second issue on Vinylite. Basses are generally thick and ponderous in vocal texture, but Journet was the exception—his voice shimmering with brilliant resonance. Balthazar's pronouncement of the papal curse displays the round sonority which featured this artist's singing. The aria from Adam's *Le Cbalet* shows him as a legitimate successor to Plançon in the splendid suavity of his legato and the finish of his vocalization and diction.

Incidentally, the Goritz *Goldene Kreuz* selection and the Journet *Favorita* are not re-issues. They were, until now, unpublished records in the files of RCA Victor. Undoubtedly, other treasures will be unearthed as this series progresses.

Surfaces are still not of the perfection which such types of records should feature. Small clicks and bumps (often in pianissimo passages) are still a plague for the careful and discriminating listener.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Verdi: La Traviata—Brindisi: *Libiamo, libiamo* (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Luigi Infantino (tenor), Adriana Guerrini (soprano), with ensemble, chorus and orchestra of the Opera House, Rome, conducted by Vincenzo Bellezza. One side, and **Verdi: Traviata**—Parigi, o cara (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Luigi Infantino (tenor) and Adriana Guerrini (soprano) with orchestra of the Opera House, Rome, conducted by Vincenzo Bellezza. 1-12" disc (C-72529). \$1.25.

Columbia probably lifted these recordings from its complete version of *La Traviata* and pressed them on

a single disc for two reasons. Luigi Infantino was a great success in his recent appearances with the New York City Center Opera Company and there is a demand for just such a disc featuring this new young star. Also there has been considerable call for a good recording of *Brindisi*, largely because this selection has been featured in a couple of popular movies. With the present disc, Columbia hopes to meet both demands—we rather think this has been accomplished and it would not surprise us at all if this record enjoys a very large sale.

Humperdinck: Hansel und Gretel—Besenbinderlied: Ach, wir armen, armen Leute Eine Hex, steinalt, Haus tief im Walde (Act I). One side, and **Humperdinck: Die Königskinder**—Verdorben—Gestorben. Gerhard Hüsch (baritone) with Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hanns Udo Müller. 1-12" disc (V-EH-1024). \$2.

Handel: Giulio Cesare—V'adore, pupille (Act II). One side, and **Handel: Arioso**—Dank sei dir, Herr. Gerhard Hüsch (baritone) with Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hanns Udo Müller. 1-12" disc (V-EH-925). \$2.

It has been a long time since these splendid recordings by Gerhard Hüsch have been available in this country—a recent shipment from abroad contained a limited quantity of each. Those interested should get in touch with a dealer who specializes in imported discs without delay.

To our mind Hüsch is one of the great artists of our time. If he is unknown to you, here is an excellent opportunity to make his acquaintance.

CHORAL



Bach: St. Matthew Passion (complete). Tiana Lemnitz, Friedel Beckmann, Karl Erb, Gerhard Hüsch, Siegfried Schulze and St. Thomas' Choir and Gewandhaus Orchestra, Leipzig, conducted by Gunther Ramin. 16-12" discs in two albums (V-DB-9165 to V-DB-9172, V-DBS-9173, V-DB-9174 to V-DB-9180). (Automatic sequence). \$40.69.

A new set of HMV records, which on 31 sides contains a reasonably but not strictly complete recording of Bach's great *Passion According to St. Matthew* has appeared recently in this country.

This should prove a reason for enthusiasm on the part of all Bach collectors, for the present set was made among historical surroundings and boasts some very distinguished elements.

Recorded in Bach's own St. Thomas Church, Leipzig, apparently during the early days of the late war, the present set makes use of the St. Thomas Church Choir and the celebrated Gewandhaus Orchestra under the authoritative direction of Gunther Ramin. Three of the soloists are well known names in America—Karl Erb, Tiana Lemnitz and Gerhard

Hüsch. The contralto, Friedel Beckmann, and the bass, Siegfried Schulze, are singers who will undoubtedly be unfamiliar to most.

Karl Erb's singing of the music of the Evangelist is quite marvellous. Mr. Erb has a light tenor with a crystal-clear, very high placement. The diction is placed on this vocal foundation and the results are amazingly distinct and precise. Very moving is the tenor's voicing of the last words on the Cross, and the death of Christ. We understand that Mr. Erb (by no means a young man) has been for many years celebrated for his conception of this music. The reasons are not hard to see.

Gerhard Hüsch is heard in the music of Jesus, which he sings with moving simplicity and a reverence becoming the wonderful words. The bass solos are also encompassed by this dignified and cultured artist.

Tiana Lemnitz sings less well than she has on several other occasions; nevertheless, the purity of her tone and her ethereal style are admirably suited to that aria with flute and two oboes, *For Love My Saviour Now Is Dying*.

The contralto, Friedel Beckmann, seemed over-vibrant vocally for such music as this. Her singing of *Erbarme dich, mein Gott* lacks ultimate distinction. However, by and large, this is a stellar quartet of soloists—singers of unusual worth and artistry; singers who command the respect of fastidious taste.

The choral singing sounds as though achieved with a good-sized boy choir. The music is approached with the necessary feeling of reverence, but the attacks and the dramatic climaxes and big moments are surely lacking in vitality and thrill.

Recording is excellent and a very fine balance between all these different forces has been achieved. The HMV surfaces are a joy for those who are sensitive to such things.

On the whole this is a very important issue of a work whose magnitude and scope cannot be described due to conscious limitations of mere words.

MAX DE SCHAUSENSEE

Byrd: Motets and Keyboard Music. Motets sung by Harvard Glee Club and Radcliffe Choral Society conducted by G. Wallace Woodworth. Keyboard Music played by Putnam Aldrich (harpsichord). 3-12" discs in album, Technichord Set T-11. \$5.88.

Technichord is to be congratulated for this fine album containing splendid recordings of music by the great English composer William Byrd (1543-1623), who with Henry Purcell (1659?-1695), may be considered England's greatest.

The present collection contains three motets from Byrd's *Gradualia* (Book I dates from 1605 and Book II from 1607); they are *Non vos relinquam*; *Sacerdotes Domini*; and *Iustorum animae*. These are su-

perbly sung by a mixed choir under the meticulous direction of G. Wallace Woodworth. Mr. Woodworth, one of the truly great choral conductors of our time, is Professor of Music at Harvard, President of the Harvard Musical Association, and Choirmaster and Organist of Harvard University.

In addition to the choral selections mentioned above, the present album contains two harpsichord pieces played with rare skill and a fine sense of the artistic by Putnam Aldrich, who is known to many record collectors for his part in Technichord's splendid recording of Bach's *Canata 106* (T-6), and for the excellent album (T-9) of baroque suites for gamba and harpsichord, which he made with Alfred Zighera. The present pieces are: *Fantasia* (from Fitzwilliam Vol. I, No. 8) and *Miserere* (from Fitzwilliam Vol. II, No. 177).

A fine booklet accompanies this set of records containing the music of the various selections, and illuminating notes on the composer, the artists and the music itself.

Bach: Johannes-Passion—Ruht wohl ihr heiligen Gebeine. Chorus and Orchestra of the Berlin College, directed by Prof. Fritz Stein. 1-12" disc (V-EH-1062). \$2.

This fine recording of the final chorus from Bach's *St. John Passion* was re-pressed in this country and appeared in Victor's catalog for several years and then was deleted. It is a grand and important record, and we are glad to advise our readers that a few copies recently arrived in a shipment from abroad.

VOCAL



Buxtehude: Aperite mihi portas justitiae. (Sung in Latin). E. Sigfuss (alto), Axel Schiotz (tenor) and H. Norgaard (bass) with instrumental accompaniment. 1-12" disc (V-Z-292). \$2.00

This cantata for alto, tenor, bass and two violins with continuo by the distinguished 17th century organist and composer, Dietrich Buxtehude, is one of the loveliest little works we have heard in many a long day. It was recorded under the auspices of The Danish Society for Information, to whom we should all be most grateful. We noted it in an European catalog some time ago, and we wondered whether we would ever have the opportunity of hearing it. The other day a few copies of the disc arrived in a shipment from abroad. It is just such unusual items that make the lot of a record reviewer tolerable. True, they do not come along very often, but when they do, hearing them makes up for the long hours we spend in listening to repeated recordings of music that we have heard over and over again.

Excellent artists, headed by the distinguished tenor, Axel Schiotz, were chosen for this recording—the blending of these fine voices with the interesting ac-

companiment makes a musical experience that we recommend most highly to all discerning music lovers.

Songs of Old Vienna. Erna Sack (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Victor Reinshagen. 3-12" discs in album. London Set LA-11. \$7.35.

This new album of recordings by the almost fabulous German coloratura, Erna Sack, contains a variety of selections. First, we have two duets with the very able tenor, Max Michtegg—*Hab nur dich allein* from Lehar's "Der Zarewitsch" and *Im Chambre separee* from Heuberger's "Der Opernball." Then we have Johann Strauss' *Vienna Blood* and *Tales from the Vienna Woods*, plus Josef Strauss' *Dorfschwalben aus Oesterreich*. All of these selections Miss Sack sings in German. The final selection, Benedict's *Carnival of Venice*, is sung in Italian.

As one listens to these discs, he does not wonder that Richard Strauss compared this unique artist to a fearless mountain climber in her ability to soar to an extraordinary top of a C above High C. It is breathtaking to say the least; certainly no singer that we know of today can accomplish the vocal pyrotechnics that Miss Sack can—and with apparent ease.

Monsieur St. Pierre. (Sung in French). Edith Piaf with orchestral accompaniment. 2-12" discs in album. Vox Set VSP-311. \$3.50.

Several months ago Vox issued an album of songs by the celebrated Parisian cabaret singer, Edith Piaf. It caught on in this country like wildfire and was little less than a sensation in its field. Thus we have the second one this month. It contains four songs similar to those in the first album, and is given the title of the first song in the collection, *Monsieur St. Pierre*. For those who know Miss Piaf, the present album will be of importance, and for those who have not made this interesting artist's acquaintance, it will be an easy and pleasant introduction.

De Koven: Oh, promise me. One side, and **D'Har-delot: Because.** Risë Stevens (mezzo-soprano) with orchestra conducted by Dudley King. 1-10" disc (C-4515M). \$1.

These two selections, appropriate for weddings, are satisfactorily sung by Miss Stevens. We have heard better recordings of this artist's voice.

VIOLIN



Lalo: Symphonie Espagnole, Op. 21. Yehudi Menuhin (violin) with the Colonne Orchestra conducted by Jean Fournet. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1207. \$6.

As in his previous recording of this work (DM-136), Menuhin's chief distinction is the fact that he includes the third movement *Intermezzo*, which is

usually omitted. With that exception, his present set is hardly more competition than his previous one for Milstein, who with the Philadelphia Orchestra (Col. MM-564) provides superior entertainment all around. Milstein's fiddling is much brighter and more vigorous and far richer in tone than Menuhin's. Menuhin's tone is clear and true, but too thin and wiry for the *Symphonie Espagnole*. The Milstein set just happens to be an unusually fine accomplishment from all standpoints, and Menuhin cannot compete, except for the fact that he plays all five movements. After hearing the lovely *Intermezzo* we wonder why it is usually omitted, for it seems quite nice and fits in well. It occupies just two record sides. Menuhin's orchestral accompaniment is efficient and the reproduction good, if not quite as appealing as Victor's domestic or British efforts.

The *Symphonie Espagnole* is a suite of five movements for violin and orchestra. The great Spanish violinist, Pablo de Sarasate, established Lalo's success with the performance of his *Violin Concerto in F*, and Lalo wrote the *Symphonie Espagnole* as another display vehicle for the great virtuoso. Although born in France, Lalo was of Spanish origin. His *Symphonie Espagnole* is based on Spanish music; however, it is not true Spanish music, but rather that pleasantly curious quasi-Spanish type of music which we find in Chabrier's *Espana*, Ravel's *Rapsodie Espagnole*, Rimsky-Korsakov, Bizet, etc. It deserves a lasting place next to the violin concertos of the masters for its genuine musical appeal as well as its fine workmanship. S.

Americana. Louis Kaufman (violin) accompanied by Annette Kaufman (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Vox Set 627. \$4.75.

The distinguished violinist, Louis Kaufman, who has recently made some very successful recordings, is particularly interested in American music. This month he presents an unique album, which is entitled "Americana." Aaron Copland is represented with a special arrangement of *Hoe-Down* from his ballet "Rodeo." This arrangement was made for Mr. Kaufman. Also by Copland is *Ukelele Serenade*, which Mr. Kaufman introduced in New York in 1943. *Blues* from the "Lenox Avenue Suite" by William Grant Still, and the same composer's spiritual, *Here's One*, both arranged for violin solo by Mr. Kaufman, are also included in this collection. Everett Helm, a thorough scholar of American folk music, supplies "Comment on Two Spirituals," which consists of the spirituals *Sinner*, *Don't Let This Harvest Pass* and *No Hidin' Place*. Mr. Kaufman originally introduced Robert McBride's *Aria and Toccata in Swing* in 1946, and has seen fit to include it in this album. The final selection is *Danza Brasileira* by Harold Triggs, a taste of Latin American rhythms, which reminds us that America does not stop at our southern border.

For those who are interested in the music that some of our American composers are producing, the present album should hold considerable interest. Mr. Kaufman is ably assisted by his very talented wife, Annette, whose piano accompaniments add greatly to the attractiveness of this unusual group of records.

Dvorák—arr. Kreisler: **Slavonic Fantasy in B minor**. One side, and **Smetana: From My Home**. Mischa Elman (violin) accompanied by Wolfgang Rosé (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0241). \$1.25.

Two tuneful pieces with a nostalgic tang, nicely played by a fine artist who has been known to record collectors for nearly forty years. Nicely recorded.

PIANO



Smetana: Polkas for Piano. Erno Balogh (piano). 4-10" discs in album. Vox Set 179. \$3.94.

New music, some of it nearly one hundred years old will be found in this album—at least it will be new to the vast majority of our readers because it is practically never heard in this country. Although Smetana probably wrote better polkas than any other composer—and Franz Liszt took delight in playing them for his audiences—it remained for the distinguished pianist, Erno Balogh, to bring them to the attention of American music lovers by recording some of them for Vox. Genuinely delightful renditions they are, as one may ascertain by listening to the present records. Mr. Balogh plays with just the proper spirit and always in the best of taste. The piano reproduction is excellent.

The selections included in this album are: *Polka in F major, No. 3* and *Polka in A minor, No. 2* (both from "Polkas"); *Polka in F sharp major, Op. 7, No. 1* and *Polka in F minor, Op. 7, No. 2* (both from "Trois polkas de salon"); and *Polka in E flat major, Op. 13, No. 2* (from "Souvenir de Boheme en forme de polkas").

Bartók Memorial Album. Bela Bartók (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Vox Set No. 625. \$5.25.

After Bartók's death, his son Peter made the original of these recordings available to Vox and thus this Memorial Album was possible. They were made for the use of a Hungarian broadcasting station and each selection is announced by the composer before he plays it. This procedure gives these recordings a very personal touch and Bartók's many friends in America will likely find this album of much more than mere intrinsic value. From a musical standpoint, the selections are not particularly representative of the composer. They are all little pieces intended for children. There are fifteen little tunes from "For Children;" *The Bear Dance*; and *Evening in Transylvania* in the group.

The reproduction is quite satisfactory and the discs are made of a very smooth unbreakable material.



HARPSICHORD

Telemann: Fantasias. Edith Weiss-Mann (harpsichord). 2-12" discs in album. Allegro Set AR-2. \$3.50.

Only occasionally do recordings of the music of the prolific German composer, Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767), appear on the lists of new releases. When they do, it is an occasion worthy of note. This is particularly true when we have records made by such a distinguished artist as Edith Weiss-Mann. For those who are not familiar with the music of Telemann, a contemporary of Handel and Bach, these discs furnish very pleasing samples.

The notes accompanying this album state that "these Fantasias have never been recorded before"; however, we are not so sure about that. Ernest Victor Wolff recorded six of them for Columbia in 1938 but as that album is not available any longer, we cannot check to see whether Miss Weiss-Mann has repeated any that were previously recorded by Mr. Wolff.

The reproduction in the present album is entirely satisfactory.

BAND



Ganne: Le Père la Victoire. One side, and **Ganne: Marche Lorraine**. Band of H. M. Coldstream Guards conducted by Capt. J. Causley Windram. 1-10" disc (V-B-8836). \$1.42.

Hamm—arr. Mackenzie-Rogan: **Milanollo** (The Coldstream March). One side, and **Davies**—arr. Amers: **Royal Air Force March Past**. Band of H. M. Coldstream Guards conducted by Capt. J. Causley Windram. 1-10" disc (V-B-8856). \$1.42.

The recordings made by England's famous military band, that of H. M. Coldstream Guards, have always enjoyed wide popularity here in the United States, and many of our readers will doubtless be glad to know that a few of them are again finding their way to our shores. A recent shipment contained copies of each of the records listed above.

ORGAN



Franck: Pastorale, Op. 19, No. 4. Fernando Germani playing the organ at Westminster Cathedral, London. 1-12" disc (V-C-3672). \$2.

Germani plays this Franck selection in a quiet and modest fashion—perhaps too much restraint is used

to suit some music lovers, but it is just right for us. A recording of this work by Courboin is included in an album of organ selections (RCA Victor M-695). Courboin makes it sound much more important than Germani does and many persons may prefer it that way. We have indicated the available versions—one may take his choice.

DICTION



Shakespeare: Hamlet—Soliloquies. Spoken by John Gielgud. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set DAU-7. \$5.25.

In this album we have some of the best-beloved passages from Hamlet, beautifully and intelligently spoken by the celebrated English actor, John Gielgud.

The selections are *O, That this too too solid flesh . . .* (Act I—Scene 2); *O all you host of heaven . . .* (Act I—Scene 5); *O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I . . .* (Act II—Scene 2); *I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent . . .* (Act II—Scene 2); *To be, or not to be . . .* (Act III—Scene 1); *How all occasions do inform against me . . .* (Act IV—Scene 4); and *What is he whose grief bares such an emphasis? . . .* (Act V—Scene 1).

These recordings have been nicely accomplished on a very smooth plastic material.

MISCELLANEOUS



Bach Selections. Andres Segovia (guitar). 2-12" discs in album. Musicraft Set 90. \$3.

Probably because of the success of its recently released album of Bach transcriptions by Segovia (Set No. 85), Musicraft proceeds to release another similar set of discs by this truly great artist.

The present album contains the following selections: *Prelude*—originally composed for lute in C minor, transcribed by Segovia for the guitar in D minor (complete composition); *Courante*—transcribed from Suite No. 2 for 'cello solo; *Sarabande* and *Bourée*—both from Suite No. 1 for lute in E minor; *Gavotte*—transcribed from Suite No. 6 for 'cello solo; and *Fugue*—composed originally in G minor for lute, transcribed for the guitar in A minor (separate and complete composition).

The great number of music lovers, who enjoyed so immensely Segovia's previous Musicraft album, will surely be delighted to learn that another—equally as fine—is now available.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$9.75.

The Concert Companion. By Robert Bagar and Louis Biancolli with an introduction by Deems Taylor. xi + 868 pp. Whittlesey House (New York). Price \$7.50.

The Art of Judging Music. By Virgil Thomson. x + 318 + xviii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$4.25.

The Record Book (International Edition). By David Hall. xii + 1394 pp. Oliver Durrell, Inc. (New York). Price \$7.50.

Koussevitzky. By Moses Smith. 400 pp. Allen, Towne, and Heath, Inc. (New York). Price \$4.

Metropolitan Opera Annals: A Chronicle of Artists and Performances. Compiled by William H. Seltsam. Introduction by Edward Johnson. xvi + 751 pp. The H. W. Wilson Co. (New York). Price \$7.

Records for Pleasure. By John Ball, Jr., ix + 214 pp. Rutgers University Press (New Brunswick, N. J.). Price \$2.50.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Asech, B—Brunswick, BL—Biblotone, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CE—Cetra, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CT—Concertone, D—Decca, DI—Disc, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, HU—Harvard Film Service, HW—Hargall, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, L—London Gramophone, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, OK—Okeh, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

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By mail to any address
50c per year

COLUMBIA RECENTLY announced its new LP (Long Playing) Microgroove record. The details of this innovation are briefly as follows: a 12-inch disc will play 45 minutes—22 to 23 minutes on each side (the average present 12-inch record plays 4 minutes per side); the new records are recorded at $33\frac{1}{3}$ r.p.m. instead of 78 r.p.m. and require a turntable that will revolve at the slower speed; nearly all symphonies and concertos may now be recorded on one 12-inch disc; grooves are cut at 224 to 300 to the inch instead of about 90 as on conventional records; all LP records will be made of Vinylite, which is nonbreakable with silent surfaces. Over one hundred LP records are now being manufactured and will be available to the public within the next thirty days; 12-inch Masterworks records will be priced at \$4.85, 10-inch at \$3.85, and 10-inch popular records at \$2.85; thus the same amount of music will cost considerably less on the LP discs. LP records require a stylus one-third the diameter of the present stylus for proper reproduction, and several phonograph manufacturers are developing players that may be connected to present instruments to play these new records.

It would seem that this new system of recording is primarily intended for those persons who are interested in classical compositions that require two or more records. It will in no way make obsolete their present libraries. Because of the extreme lightness of the pick-up which has been designed to play LP discs, it is stated that these new records will play as many or more times, without showing signs of wear, as the present conventional discs. We tested a number of LP discs on laboratory high-fidelity reproducing equipment similar to that used in the best broadcasting stations. We can state, therefore, from actual experience, that

the LP recordings themselves are entirely satisfactory—the fidelity of reproduction is at least equal to present recordings and in some cases seems to be considerably superior.

However, we have not heard a commercial record player designed to be attached to present radios or radio-combinations that will play the LP records entirely satisfactorily. Undoubtedly one or more will be made available, and when they are, we will mention them in these columns. At this moment, the problem yet to be solved is the development of an adequate turntable that will revolve at sufficiently constant speed to permit the LP recordings to be played without "wows." This is no trick if price and size are not factors, but to develop one that is of practical size and reasonable price will require careful research by the best of our phonograph manufacturers.

In our opinion, Columbia has produced highly satisfactory long-playing records; all we need now is a commercially practical instrument on which to play them.

* * *

A recent shipment from England contained a limited number of copies of the new 1948 edition of the "His Master's Voice" catalog. The price of this catalog is 50c (postpaid within U.S.A.) and copies will be sent to all those who request them as long as our present supply lasts.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

In 1936, the first edition of this stupendous work was compiled by R. D. Darrell. A second edition edited by George Clark Leslie was published in 1942. Now we have the third edition

—“bigger and better than ever.” At least it is bigger, but we doubt whether it is better or whether anyone could be more meticulous in the preparation of such a work than its first editor. We miss particularly Mr. Darrell's clever and always illuminating little thumb-nail biographies of the various composers which added greatly to the charm of the first edition. The present editor covers the ground, but his biographical notes lack the sparkle of Mr. Darrell's.

Through the years, this book has been considered the “Bible” of the record industry, and the present revised and considerably enlarged edition will doubtless be welcomed by thousands of record collectors throughout the world. It is hard to conceive of a real collector not wishing a copy. The present edition “includes all records issued up to and including January of 1948. In addition, it catlogues the major portion of all records placed on the market through June 1st and contains, as well, listings of many important sets which—though in some cases already manufactured—have yet to be released to the public.” From the above quotation taken from the Preface, it would seem that this volume is not only up-to-date but rather ahead of its time. In addition to a full coverage of the classical records issued by domestic publishers, there are listed practically all of the important items released by European record manufacturers. This is really a comprehensive volume.

As in former editions, records are listed alphabetically by composers. Two new features have been added: namely, where there are several recordings of the same composition, they are listed according to their importance; presumably the version the editor prefers is listed first, and the balance in the order of his further preference; and at the end of the volume, there is included a list of performers with a page reference, so that the recordings of any particular artist may be found in the general body of the text.

The publisher's announcement states that “over 800 composers, over 75,000 recordings are listed in this new edition.” We did not check this statement, but we have no reason

to doubt it—we did spot check quite a few unusual presently available recordings and every one was found correctly listed in its proper place. We are sure that we are going to find the present volume of great value to us; accordingly, we do not hesitate to recommend it to our readers.

* * *

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues published during the last sixteen years are available. The price is 5c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 125 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

ORCHESTRA



Smetana: The Moldau. Three sides, and **Dvorák: Husitská Overture, Op. 67.** Boston “Pops” Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 3-12” discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1210. \$4.75.

The *Husitská Overture*, or Hussite Overture, as it is also known, appears on records here for the first time. Written for the opening of the National Theatre in Prague, it is a musical description of the Hussite wars, famous in Czech history. This tonal picture of the war between the adherents of John Huss, great Bohemian religious reformer, and the Imperialists, makes use of the theme of a Hussite hymn. It is said that Dvorák also included a portrait of General Zizka, a great warrior and Hussite leader. Nearly all composers who use such subject matter end with an intense and rather noisy composition that rarely finds a permanent place in the repertoire, and this work is no exception. It may have been a sincere outpouring of Dvorák's heart; but to us it seems bombastic. Fiedler leads his men through a rousing and martial performance that shows the music's spirit and fervor to its best advantage.

If you are interested in this work you must also accept three sides in the album devoted to *The Moldau*. If you already have *The Moldau*, or don't care for it, the album becomes an expensive luxury. If, on the other hand, you are in the market for *The Moldau*, the *Hussite Overture* is required purchasing should you choose this album. We cannot see these couplings as being good business, except that one is not forced to pay an extra dollar for an extra album cover. Last month we had an album containing two Handel works, and this month, in addition to the present set, there is also the Strauss *Burlesque* and Weber *Konzertstück*. One advantage of these couplings is that they permit easier playing on record changers.

Fiedler's *Moldau* is a bright and sturdy reading along conventional lines that is superior to Kindler's (DM-921), not as searching as Kubelik's (in DM-523), and not as mellow as Walter's (Col. MX-211). It is brilliantly reproduced with fairly good surfaces. Some passages of the *Hussite Overture* are blurred where the cymbal crashes occur. S.

Vivaldi—tr. Molinari: **Concerto in A Major**. A. Gramegna and E. Giaccone (violins) with orchestra conducted by M. Willy Ferrero. 2-12" discs (CE-BB-25047 and CE-BB-25048) (manual sequence). \$5.25.

This pair of discs from Italy contain some lovely 18th century music which has been transcribed for orchestra with two solo violins by the distinguished Italian conductor, Bernardino Molinari. It has been splendidly recorded, and those who are interested in orchestral music that is off of the beaten path will very likely find this recording quite fascinating.

The original composer was the outstanding Italian musician, Antonio Vivaldi (1675?-1743).

Ravel: La Valse. Three sides, and **Debussy**—orch. Ravel: **Danse**, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-296. \$3.50.

Ravel: Rapsodie Espagnole. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1200. \$3.50.

Reiner's reading of *La Valse* seems less volatile, inspired, and "heady" than Montoux's (Vic. DM-820), yet his orchestra, while not as sharp and secure as the Philadelphia, is better than Montoux's San Francisco (of that period anyhow). The reproduction of Reiner's set is a shade underdone while Montoux's was somewhat overdone. The choice is therefore not a simple one; we would take Montoux on the ground that his performance seems to excite us more.

Koussevitzky's reading of the *Rapsodie Espagnole* is another typical example of his coloring ability and the Boston Orchestra's virtuosity. We would name this set as first choice of the available *Rapsodie Espagnoles* were it not for the uncompromising surface noise which accompanies the album. The peculiar hiss that appears with the music makes it necessary to tune down the highs on even an average phonograph to the point where much of the precious coloring is lost. As Rodzinski made a notable recording of this work (Col. MX-234), one of his finest efforts with the Cleveland Orchestra, we feel rather inclined towards his version. One noted critic, at the time Rodzinski's set was issued, thought the coloring and approach was equal to the old Stokowski set, and the newer reproduction was, of course, superior. It is possible that other pressings of the Koussevitzky set will not be as noisy as ours, in which case it is worth acquiring.

Each of these Ravel scores presents the master in brilliant, though contrasting, moods. The *Rapsodie* is marvelous landscaping and excellent orchestrating, economical but extremely colorful. *La Valse* is a satirical tour de force that has a crushing impact on those who understand its story. As the years pass be regarded more highly as a great colorist and on, Ravel seems to take on greater stature, and to orchestrator. S.

Schubert: Symphony No. 5 in B flat. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1215. \$4.75.

Gay, charming, vivacious, brimming with lovely lyrical melody, this symphony has always been a joy to us from first note to last. It has the spirit of Vienna sprinkled all over it. Written in the short space of four weeks, when Schubert was only nineteen years old, the manuscript is almost devoid of erasure and corrections, giving the impression that the work was penned at fever heat, and with self-assurance. It is a little masterpiece that frequently reminds us of Mozart, and occasionally of Haydn. Strange that we do not hear it oftener; its popularity should be far greater.

The *Fifth* was Schubert's best symphony at that point, surpassing the preceding ones by virtue of its fine classical form. Here for the first time was a firm grasp of form and a comfortable Schubertian style. It is scored without trumpets and drums. Outstanding are the poetic second movement and the gay and rhythmic finale. If you are not familiar with this symphony we can almost guarantee you will like it immensely.

Koussevitzky plays this work with an understanding touch, not too crisp and light, but the Boston Orchestra's tonal qualities sing out Schubert's lovely melodies with luscious effects. His only competition is the Beecham set (Col. MM-366), which is stiff competition indeed for that was another magical bit of Beecham that found a happy outlet in this lilting work. We find the lines of distinction fine, with the reproduction a shade better in this set. Our own copy of the *Fifth* is the old Telefunken by Von Benda, to whose reading we prefer either Beecham or Koussevitzky. Surfaces on our review copy are noisy, with an annoying hiss appearing and disappearing all the time. We recommend trying the set carefully before purchasing. S.

Copland: Rodeo—Four Dance Episodes. Five sides, and **Copland: Billy the Kid**—Waltz. Dallas Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1214. \$4.75.

From the complete score of *Rodeo*, Copland extracted an orchestral suite for concert performance comprising the four dance episodes here recorded.

Rodeo was written in 1942, on commission from The Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, choreography by Agnes de Mille. As the title implies, it is cowboy stuff, and uses the traditional Saturday afternoon rodeo of the American Southwest as a basis. The theme of the ballet is the age old problem for women: "how to get a suitable man." The four dance episodes used in this suite are Buckaroo Holiday, Corral Nocturne, Saturday Night Waltz, and Hoe-Down. All of them except Corral Nocturne use some folk music.

It is a tribute to Copland to say that this music, with all its gaiety and Western folk music style, never sounds banal. The good quality of his writing is ever evident without detracting from the genuine flavor of the work. This music is mighty clever; it is interesting to listen to apart from the ballet. Considering the great success of his *Appalachian Spring*, Copland's *Rodeo* should find a large following waiting for it. We did not see the ballet when it was in town, but others tell us that *Rodeo* was very fine and made quite a hit. Add the ballet lovers to Copland's musical following and behold, we may have a really well liked American composer (beside Gershwin). Copland is clever and capable and he deserves a decent popularity.

Dorati plays this lusty music with unflagging verve and zest. His orchestra does quite well, and the reproduction is spacious and full. All in all we have some real American music beautifully served, and we hope to see many music lovers partake of it and enjoy it. It is certainly a palatable dish. S.

Sibelius: Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 43. The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-759. \$7.25.

We admit, without a blush, that the *Second* is our favorite Sibelius symphony. It is easily the loveliest and most readily understandable. We admit it is lush to a high degree, but it is very tasty. The performance in our collection, which we hold has been the best to date, is the Barbirolli set (Col. MM-423). The ranking favorite is the Koussevitzky album (Vic. DM-272); however, in addition to poor and noisy reproduction, it has always seemed too slow and ponderous. Barbirolli understands this score perfectly and made a fine recording of it. The playing of the New York Philharmonic in those days was not of the best, and his set has some questionable orchestral technique. We are therefore pleased to report that Ormandy and the Philadelphians fill the bill to the queen's taste in this new set. The orchestra plays with customary fine finish, and Ormandy takes the score in good stride. This music is well suited to his talents and he makes it ring, being especially effective in the triumphant finale. The second movement is also well shaped and strong and virile, in keeping with its patriotic message. Reproduction and surfaces are excellent.

While this recording is a worthy addition to the ranks, we recognize it as a purely commercial venture—fodder for the Philadelphia Orchestra record sessions, and more of the same for the Orchestra's many admirers through records, radio, and nationwide tours (this work figures prominently on its programs). But Columbia lacks a couple of this popular master's symphonies in its catalog, as well as nearly all of his other works. Considering the great, and growing, popularity of Sibelius, Columbia or someone would do well to begin recording a large quantity of his best works, possibly even establish a society. That would be a worthy and possibly a profitable venture. S.

Khatchaturian: Gayne—Ballet Suite. Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1212. \$3.50.

It would seem that RCA Victor is attempting to jump on the bandwagon with these excerpts from Khatchaturian's *Gayne Ballet Suite*. In our opinion, the bandwagon has been missed because Columbia issued a more complete version by Efreim Kurtz and the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York (M-664) over a year ago. In addition to being more complete, the Kurtz version is far superior in interpretation—Kurtz is a hard man to beat in music of this character.

For the record, the present Victor set contains: *Sabre Dance*; *Dance of Ayshe*; *Dance of the Rose Maidens*; and *Lullaby*. In addition to all of these, the Kurtz recording contains: *Lezhinka*; *Dance of the Young Kurds*; *Armen's Variations*; and *Dance of the Kurds*. Rodzinski's recording of the *Sabre Dance* was issued on one side of a single disc (V-12-0209) several months ago, with the *Waltz* from Khatchaturian's *Masquerade Suite* played by the Boston "Pops" on the reverse side.

Prokofieff: Summer Day Suite, Op. 65. Santa Monica Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jacques Rachmilovich. Three sides, and **Prokofieff: Piano Toccata, Op. 1.** Lillian Steuber (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Disc Set 803. \$3.52.

A year or so ago, Ray Lev, the very able pianist, recorded a series of short pieces which is known as *Pieces for Children, Op. 65* for Concert Hall Society. That album (AC) was well received and still enjoys a steady sale. Prokofieff composed these pieces for piano in 1935. In 1941, he took several of them as a basis for the present suite, which bares the same opus number. Arranged for orchestra, they still contain their childish charm, and we rather feel that the present album will find favor with those persons who like modest music of this character.

Rachmilovich is in sympathy with the music that he is conducting here, and the Santa Monica Symphony under his careful direction produces a per-

formance that calls for high praise. The reproduction is quite satisfactory.

R. Strauss: Feuersnot, Op. 50—Love Scene. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (V-12-0289). \$1.25.

Every so often, a disc comes to the studio that brings with it a selection that we once enjoyed but had quite forgotten. Such a disc is the present one. As we played it, it recalled the recording of this selection from Strauss' early opera *Feuersnot* (1901) made a great number of years ago by Clements Krause and the Vienna Philharmonic, which has long since disappeared from the catalogs. Sir Thomas' version brought back pleasant memories, for this is very delightful music. As it will doubtless be new to many of our readers, we suggest that it is worth investigating.

Corelli—arr. Pinelli: Suite for String Orchestra. The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (C-12836D). \$1.25.

The string sections of the Philadelphia Orchestra have received the highest praise from numerous famous critics; and one may easily understand why, when he listens to this superb recording. This Suite, arranged from various movements of Sonatas, Op. 5 by the celebrated Italian composer, Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713), contains as lovely melodies as one will come across in many a long day—refined, charming, and pleasing to listen to. All in all this is a record that can be recommended without reservations of any kind.

CONCERTO



Medtner Society Set, Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Op. 50 (nine sides). Nicolas Medtner (piano) with Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Issay Dobrowen. *Arabesque, Op. 7, No. 2* (one side). *Fairy Tale, Op. 51, No. 1* and *Fairy Tale, Op. 26, No. 3* (two sides). Nicolas Medtner (piano). *Spanish Romance, Op. 52, No. 5* and *Butterfly, Op. 28, No. 3* (one side). Tatiana Makushina (soprano) accompanied by Nicolas Medtner (piano). *To a Dreamer, Op. 32, No. 6* (one side). Oda Slobodskaya (soprano) accompanied by Nicolas Medtner (piano). 7-12" discs in album (V-DB-9191 to V-DB-9197). \$18.38.

Each of the record labels of this Society Set bears the following notation: H. H. the Maharajah of Mysore's Musical Foundation "The Medtner Society." And therein lies an interesting and romantic story. Destiny brought Medtner's genius within the sphere of vision and great musical appreciation of H. H. the Maharajah of Mysore, and the Maharajah decided that Medtner must no longer languish in the desert of neglect. The Maharajah made funds available that

the 67-year-old Medtner's works might be recorded, that his genius and contribution to the world of music might be made known. The greater part of his musical creation has now been recorded, the composer both supervising the recording and playing the piano parts. The present set is the first of a series of Society Sets to be issued.

Of the three piano concertos recorded we have here Medtner's Second, which he dedicated to a fellow Russian, Rachmaninoff. It is a much inspired work, quite original, and completely orthodox in harmonic matters. Medtner is no cacophonous modern; he is romantic, reactionary, derivative, or what-have-you—but not modern. That he is a genius of high order is apparent, and this concerto will unquestionably become a popular item in time, for what this world needs is something new in the way of piano concertos that makes as much sense as those that are now worn threadbare. Here is a romantic and brilliant, even racy, work which fills the bill. Medtner plays it in the grand style, with fine finish and detail. The orchestra is quite good, if not perfect, and the reproduction is super-British.

The *Fairy Tales* appeared years ago in an album by Medtner (Vic. M-384). They, and the *Arabesque*, are choice items, beautifully played and recorded. Oda Slobodskaya, the distinguished soprano, sings *To a Dreamer* with consummate artistry. This is a fine song, obviously Russian in feeling (Medtner regards his art and music as entirely Russian in spirit). Tatiana Makushina sings the other two songs, which have elaborate and exquisite piano accompaniments. This whole album is admirable music of a high order, with finesse, good workmanship, and above all the quality of being enjoyable to hear. We recommend this set without reservation, and eagerly await the next volume.

S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Debussy: Quartet in G minor, Op. 10. Seven sides, and **Haydn: Quartet in D, Op. 64, No. 5** ("The Lark")—Finale: Vivace. The Paganini Quartet. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1213. \$6. (Also available in Vinylite, DV-17, \$9.)

In considering this item, one must give thought to the very brilliant recording of this work which the Budapest Quartet made for Columbia some six or seven years ago (M-467). Perhaps some music lovers may feel that the Budapest version is a bit too brilliant, perhaps a trifle too correct technically; there are some that feel Debussy should be played with more attention to the spirit of the work than to the precise musical nomenclature as it appears on the printed score. We have noticed that French musicians generally play French music with less precision than German performers do; it would seem that they have developed a more flexible style that is preferred by their countrymen and other music

lovers as well. If you are one of these, it is very likely that you will prefer the present performance by the Paganini Quartet.

Mozart: Quartet No. 11 in E flat, K. 171. The Loewenguth String Quartet. 2-12" discs in album. Vox Set No. 183. \$3.50

This is an American re-pressing of an European Polydor recording and a very welcome one for at least two reasons. In the first place, it gives music lovers in this country an opportunity to hear the work of the Loewenguth String Quartet, a truly superb group of players. It provides the only recording we know of of this Mozart Quartet, a not too important one among the composer's early works in this form written in the Italian idiom, but one that contains many pleasing melodies—not too profound but one that makes very pleasant listening.

The reproduction is entirely satisfactory and the record surfaces smooth.

Johann Christian Bach: Sonata Notturna in E flat. Merckel and Schwartz (violins) and Navarra (violoncello). 2-10" discs (OL-118 and OL-119). \$3.20.

This is really a miniature suite containing several dainty little dance movements (saraband, gavotte, etc.) by the great Johann Sebastian's youngest son. It is charming music, and as performed by the able artists who have made this recording, it is a worthy addition to any library of chamber music. The reproduction is well up to the high standard set by L'Oiseau-Lyre.

CHORAL



Brahms: Ein Deutes Requiem, Op. 45. Hans Hotter (baritone), Elizabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano) with the Gesellschaft Choir and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 10-12" discs in 2 volumes. Columbia Set MM-755. \$15.50.

Brahms: Ein Deutes Requiem, Op. 45. James Pease (bass), Eleanor Steber (soprano), with the RCA Victor Chorale and Symphony Orchestra conducted by Robert Shaw. 9-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1236. \$12.25.

At long last what ardent Brahms enthusiasts have been patiently waiting for—a complete recording of the German symphonist's greatest choral work, *The German Requiem*—appears this month. For these patient waiters not merely one, but two versions are now offered for a choice—a European and a domestic recording.

A choice, however, is not easy, for both the Victor (Robert Shaw) and the Columbia (von Karajan) offer widely contrasting advantages.

Victor claims that three years of solid preparation, following a performance of the work by Shaw at the

New York City Center, is climaxed by the appearance of its album. The set was (for our readers who believe in accuracy) recorded during November, 1947.

Columbia's version was made in Vienna during the last two years and was more than well received by British gramophone addicts and critics when it first appeared in England during the spring of 1948.

A comparison of the two sets is interesting. Victor's is perhaps more clearly and transparently recorded and the choral work under Robert Shaw is more definitely stenciled than Herbert von Karajan's ensemble passages.

On the other hand, Shaw lacks the maturity, with its resulting depth and compassion, that one finds in his Viennese competitor. The Columbia version is decidedly more mellow both tonally and emotionally, and its sense of text is more profound.

Of the soloists, there is little to choose between Hans Hotter and James Pease, though here again, Hotter seems like a more mature artist than the young American bass-baritone. Both singers, however, are completely satisfactory.

The soprano solo—one of the most demanding and beautiful passages of the *Requiem*—finds Eleanor Steber singing for Victor and Elizabeth Schwarzkopf for Columbia. One might say that Mme. Steber is earthy where her rival is ethereal. The latter quality seems the appropriate one here. Mme. Steber sings well and her voice often sounds warm and beautiful, but there is too much emotion and theatricalism for this type of music. Mme. Schwarzkopf, on the other hand, reminds one of Elizabeth Schumann in style and tonal features. Her technique is admirable and her singing is detached and spiritual, if a little cold. However, after reading the text, this angelic detachment seems like the proper note to strike for Brahms' wonderfully evocative music.

Shaw's *tempi* are crisper and brisker than van Karajan's, as is shown by the fact that Victor employs 18 record-sides to Columbia's 20 for the performance of the *Requiem*.

Clarity and precision are emphasized by Shaw, but the Viennese conductor gets more out of his forces (which sound larger). The crescendos and climaxes of the Viennese version are more impressive, and there is far more nuance and attention to detail in dynamics.

If crystal-clear precision and rhythms that move is what you like, Shaw would be your choice. However, if mellowness and maturity of approach and profundity of emotion is what you exact from such music, von Karajan and his forces are the answer to what you want.

Recording and surfaces of both sets are admirable, with Victor having a slight edge for clarity of detail and transparency of sound.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Evening Service—Opening Versicles and Responses, Psalm 65. One side, and **Evening Service**—Magnificat in B flat (Willan). Choir of the Royal School of Church Music directed by Sir Sidney H. Nicholson, with organ accompaniment. 1-12" disc (RSCM-ROX 186). \$2.10.

Evening Service—Concluding Versicles and Responses Collects. One side, and **Evening Service**—Nunc Dimittis in B flat (Willan) and Creed (spoken). Choir of the Royal School of Church Music directed by Sir Sidney H. Nicholson with organ accompaniment. 1-12" disc (RSCM-ROX 187). \$2.10.

These recordings were taken from a B.B.C. broadcast of an Evening Service. They have been very nicely accomplished and all persons who are interested in the liturgy of the Episcopal Church will find them of particular interest.

From time to time we have called our readers' attention to the very fine recordings made by the Royal School of Church Music. A complete list will be sent to anyone requesting it—just drop a card to the publishers of this bulletin asking for a list of the R.S.C.M. records.

Poulenc: Petites Voix. (Sung in French). RCA Victor Chorale conducted by Robert Shaw. 1-10" disc (V-10-1409). \$1.

This work is divided into five songs, with words by Madeleine Ley: *La petite fille sage*; *Le chéin perdu*; *En rentrant de l'école*; *Le petit garçon malade*; and *Le bérison*. Although ably performed by Robert Shaw and the RCA Victor Chorale, we can recommend this disc only to those persons having children interested in French songs.

Brahms: Ein deutsches Requiem, Op. 45—Selig sind, die da Leid tragen. Three sides, and **Haydn: Die Jahreszeiten**—Komm, holder Lenz. (Sung in German). Choir of the Singing Academy directed by Prof. George Schumann. 2-12" discs (V-EH-257/8) (manual sequence). \$3.99.

Brahms: Ein deutsches Requiem, Op. 45—Denn alles Fleisch, es ist wie Gras. (Sung in German). Choir of the Singing Academy directed by Prof. George Schumann with Berlin State Opera Orchestra. 2-12" discs (V-EH-265/6) (manual sequence). \$3.99.

These four discs, containing the first two sections of Brahms' *A German Requiem*, have been famous for a number of years. Before World War II, many copies were imported and enjoyed wide popularity in this country among music lovers. They have been missing from dealers' stock for some time. A recent shipment from abroad contained a few copies, and we thought our readers would be glad to know that they are now again available.

Grant—arr. Robertson: **Crimond** (Scottish Psalm Tune). One side, and **Kennedy-Fraser**—arr. Bantock: **Sea Sorrow** (From "Songs of the Hebrides"). Glasgow Orpheus Choir conducted by Sir Hugh Robertson. 1-12" disc (V-C-3639). \$2.

Among lovers of choral recordings the records of the Glasgow Orpheus Choir are becoming more and more popular. After listening to the present disc, it is very easy to see why this is true. Sir Hugh Robertson directs these selections with excellent taste and the results he attains places this record in the top bracket of any list of choral recordings.



OPERA

Operatic Arias. Lily Pons (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Andre Kostelanetz. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-740. \$4.75.

No season would seem quite complete without a new set of Lily Pons records—and here we have the diminutive lady's thirteenth album to date.

Four operatic arias are presented—three of them previously recorded for RCA Victor when Mme. Pons adorned that company's roster.

Comparing those earlier versions with the present ones, several things are apparent. The new discs are better recorded, with more volume and clearer orchestral reproduction; the singer's voice was firmer and more fluent a dozen years ago.

Mme. Pons has hardly changed the embellishments she uses in *Una voce poco fa* from *Barber of Seville* one iota from her original patterns, when she first assumed the role of Rosina in New York. While these have remained the same, the facility and freshness of the voice have somewhat faded. The singer now is far more careful (she was never a spontaneous or inspired artist at best), and her roulades and staccati give the impression of having been repeated many times.

The aria from *Le Coq D'Or* has always been one of Mme. Pons' prize plums, though one does not care too much for the changes of melodic line and the unnecessary and exhibitionistic high E she interpolates with a flourish at the close.

Olimpia's song from *Les Contes d'Hoffman* has never before been recorded by the soprano in America, though she made a record of this selection for French Odeon circa 1930, which bears the legend under her name—*chanteuse legere des Casinos de Cannes & Deauville*. More amusing conceptions of the mechanical doll's song have been realized by others, though the singing here is clean-cut and crisp.

The air of parade, *La Fauvette avec ses petits* from Gretry's 18th century opera, *Zemire et Azore*, shows off the singer's fine classic style and distinguished traditions as a singer of music of this type.

Andre Kostelanetz supplies accompaniments that are perfectly tailored to his wife's tenuous singing. Reproduction is excellent; surfaces good.

MAX DE SCHAUSENSEE.

Rossini: Il Barbiere di Siviglia—La Calunnia e un venticello (Act I). One side, and **Puccini: La Bohème**—Vicchia zimarra (Act IV). (Sung in Italian). Ezio Pinza (bass) with Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Fausto Cleva. 1-12" disc (C-72528D). \$1.25.

Ezio Pinza shows his rare versatility in these two arias—the humorous "Calumny is a zephyr" from *The Barber of Seville*, and the tragic moment in *La Bohème*, when Colline bids farewell to his shabby but beloved coat. Admirers of this fine artist will find that this excellent disc holds great charm for them. Reproduction—splendid.

Wagner: Der Meistersinger—Am stillen Herd (Act 1). Helge Roswaenge (tenor) with the Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Franz Alfred Schmidt. One side, and **Wagner: Siegfried**—Ho-Hol . . . Schmiede, mein Hammer (Act I). Max Lorenz and Erich Zimmermann (tenors) with the Bayreuth Festival House Orchestra conducted by Heinz Tietjen. 1-12" disc (RF-R-70078). \$2.63.

These two European Wagnerian recordings were probably dubbed from original copies that were brought to this country. If you are interested in the outstanding German artists who made them, you will probably be interested in this disc. The dubbings have been nicely accomplished on a non-breakable material with silent surfaces.

Bellini: La Sonnambula—Ah! non credea mirarti (Act III). One side, and **Ponchielli: Lina**—La madre mia. (Sung in Italian). Margherita Carosio (soprano) with the Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, conducted by Franco Patane. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6388). \$2.63.

Verdi: Rigoletto—Ah! Solo per me l'infamia (Act II). One side, and **Rossini: Il Barbiere de Siviglia**—Dunque io son (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Margherita Carosio (soprano) and Carlo Tagliabue (baritone) with the Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, conducted by Franco Patane. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6387). \$2.63.

Four records of the lovely voice of Margherita Carosio are vouchsafed us this month. No more exquisite singing than this soprano's crystalline *legato*, sustained *cantilena* and sense of repose in Bellini's andante, *Ab non credea mirarti* from *La Sonnambula*, has appeared recently on records. This is the true *bel canto* style in all its purity. On the reverse, Mme. Carosio sings an obscure aria, *La madre mia*, from Amilcare Ponchielli's *Lina*. This unknown opera was originally written under the name of *La Savo-*

jardo and given in Cremona in 1861. Ponchielli revised his opera, renaming it *Lina*, and brought it out in Milan in 1877. The music is not of much interest, except that it gives Mme. Carosio some effective moments of which she takes full advantage.

The singer is also paired with that fine baritone, Carlo Tagliabue, in duets from *Rigoletto* and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. The former contains as fine a performance of the passage *Piangi fanciulla* as one is likely to hear. The Rossini duet has been surpassed by other singers in the past. Mme. Carosio's slender yet penetrating tone blends beautifully with Mr. Tagliabue's noble baritone. D.

Wagner: Die Meistersinger—Mein Kind (Act III). (Sung in German). Herbert Janssen (baritone) with Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Max Rudolph. One side, and **Wagner: Die Meistersinger**—Selig wie die Sonne (Act III). (Sung in German). Polyna Stoska (soprano), Herbert Janssen (baritone), Torsten Ralf (tenor), Herta Glaz (contralto), and John Garris (tenor) with Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Max Rudolph. 1-12" disc (C-72518D). \$1.25.

Made on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House, this important scene from the well-beloved *Die Meistersinger*, beginning with Hans Sachs' aria *Mein Kind* and continuing through the famous *Quintet*, makes one of the best recordings that Columbia has achieved in its series at that great home of opera. Collectors of operatic recordings will doubtless find it of prime interest.

VOCAL



Bach: Arias. Bach Aria Group directed by William H. Scheide. 4-12" discs in album. Vox Set 637. \$6.

The inside cover of this album is headed "Bach Aria Group Volume No. 1." We sincerely hope that there will be others to follow because this collection of hitherto unrecorded Bach arias excited us greatly.

William H. Scheide, the director of this exemplary group, says in the notes which accompany the album, ". . . where there is a vast group of pieces, such as the over 650 arias, that do not fit standard concert groups, nobody expects to hear them—to such an extent are we the prisoners of performers. This state of affairs is surely absurd." Believing this, he formed the Bach Aria Group expressly for the purpose of presenting this music.

The ariists are adequate, although not especially well-known. Bach apparently had singers in his day of greater virtuosity, for the arias contain difficult trills occasionally slurred by the present group. This will, we believe, not detract from the pleasure that

the legions of Bach fans will derive from these discs. The surfaces are fine.

The arias contained in this set are as follows: *Cantata No. 8*—Doch weichet . . .; *Aeolus*—Zweig' und äste . . .; *Cantata No. 127*—Die seele ruht . . .; *Cantata No. 97*—Ich traue seiner gnaden . . .; *Cantata No. 105*—Wie zittern und wanken . . .; *Cantata No. 43*—Ich sehe schon im geist . . .

Todd Duncan Recital. Todd Duncan (baritone) with piano accompaniments by William Allen. 4-10" disc in album. Musicraft Set No. 82. \$3.94.

Todd Duncan and Porgy are practically synonymous in the minds of most music lovers. It is easy to see why, when we consider the fact that Duncan sang that role over 1600 times in Gershwin's great folk opera "Porgy and Bess." It was at first difficult to convince the public that this artist was not a "one-role" singer. The start of that accomplishment was the success of his debut as a concert baritone at Town Hall in March 1944. Since then he has given recitals throughout America and in many foreign countries. He has sung white roles with a white cast with the New York City Opera Company. He has appeared with many symphony orchestras including the Chicago Symphony, the National Symphony (Washington) and others. He recently returned from a brilliant tour of Australia and New Zealand and is now headed for England and the Continent.

Duncan has a voice that may not be suitable for everything in the baritone repertory, but in his recitals he selects those pieces that he can sing well. The selections in this album are taken from the programs of his recitals. They are: *The Song of the Flea*; *In the Silence of the Night*; two selections from "Porgy and Bess"—*I Got Plenty of Nothin'* and *Lament of Porgy*; *Waters of Tralee*; *Omimba*; *Ol' Man River* from "Show Boat;" and *Everytime I Feel the Spirit*.

Those who have enjoyed Todd Duncan's singing will certainly find this album well worth investigation.

Romantic Melodies. Jeanette MacDonald (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Robert Armbruster. 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-1217. \$5.

Jeanette MacDonald's great host of admirers will doubtless be very enthusiastic about this new album. It contains the following selections from American musical plays: *I'll See You Again*; *Zigeuner*; *Summertime*; and *The Man I Love*—two selections by the ever-popular Carrie Jacobs Bond *I Love You Truly* and *A Perfect Day*—two songs by Debussy *Romance* and *Beau Soir*. The last two selections are sung in French.

All in all, Miss MacDonald presents these songs very nicely—they are all selections that the average person may enjoy. This album should find a wide

market, especially among those persons who never miss a movie in which Miss MacDonald appears.

Songs of Stephen Foster. Nelson Eddy (baritone) with chorus and orchestra conducted by Robert Armbruster. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-745. \$6.

Of especial note is the fact that Mr. Eddy has chosen some of Foster's lesser known selections for this attractive album, such as his first published work *Open Thy Lattice, Love*. Mr. Eddy's voice is always charming, and the accompaniments are admirably suited to these selections. Reproduction—excellent.

The numbers heard are *Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming*; *The Merry, Merry Month of May*; *Old Black Joe*; *My Brudder Gum*; *Oh Boys, Carry Me 'Long*; *De Camptown Races*; *Sweetly She Sleeps*; *My Alice Fair*; *Uncle Ned*; *My Old Kentucky Home*; *Dolly Day*; *Open Thy Lattice, Love*; *Fairy Belle*; *Oh! Susanna*; *I Will Be True to Thee*; *Jenny June*; *Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair*; *There's No Such Girl as Mine*.

Reger: Des Kindes Gebet. One side, and **Reger: Waldeinsamkeit.** (Sung in German.) Anni Frind (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Bruno Seidler-Winkler. 1-10" disc (V-EG-3643). \$1.42.

Among the few recordings that are available of the lovely songs of Max Reger (1873-1916), the present disc contains two of the most fascinating. They were recorded in Germany before the war, but copies of them have not been available for several years until a recent shipment from abroad brought a few to this country. Anni Frind's pleasing voice of superb quality makes this record one that should appeal to all collectors of lieder.

Handel: Messiah—Every valley shall be exalted. One side, and **Handel: Messiah**—Comfort ye, my people. Heddle Nash (tenor) with the Philharmonia Chamber Orchestra conducted by Maurice Miles. 1-12" disc (V-C-3454). \$2.

One of England's most distinguished of oratorio singers presents two popular arias from Handel's *Messiah*. Heddle Nash, through his recordings, has quite a following among music lovers on this side of the Atlantic. They will doubtless be pleased to know that copies of this record are available in this country.

Kern: The Touch of Your Hand (from "Roberta"). One side, and **Kreisler: Stars in My Eyes.** Allan Jones (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Roy Sinatra. 1-10" disc (V-10-1419). \$1.

We can't hand this one very much. Allan Jones' voice in both selections has a shrill twang that is not pleasing to say the least. We don't think it is Mr. Jones' fault, we just think the recording is not up to standard.

Matheus de Perusio: Gloria in Excelsis. J. Archimbaud (soprano), R. Bonté (tenor), and Lafosse (bass trumpet). One side, and **Jacopo da Balogna: Non al suo Amante.** J. Archimbaud (soprano) and R. Bonté (tenor). 1-12" disc (OL-1). \$2.10.

This unusual disc contains fine examples of 14th century music, and strange as it may seem, to our modern ears it sounds quite pleasing, and is certainly very interesting. Éditions de L'Oiseau-Lyre, the publishers of this disc, have secured two excellent singers for these selections, and the reproduction is of the best. For students of the history of music this record should be of especial importance.

The publishers of this bulletin still have a few L'Oiseau-Lyre catalogs left which they will send gratis to any reader requesting one.

Songs of Erin. Kate Smith (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Jack Miller. 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set C-116. \$3.90.

Kate Smith turns her attention to Irish songs this month and produces recordings that are sure to please her many fans, especially those who fancy sentimental ballads about the Emerald Isle.

The selections that Miss Smith has chosen for the present album are: *Too-ra-loo-ra-loo'-ral*; *Molly Malone*; *Where the River Shannon Flows*; *Mother Machree*; *When Irish Eyes Are Smiling*; *Macushla*; *My Wild Irish Rose*; and *A Little Bit of Heaven*.

Scott—arr. Lehmann: **Annie Laurie.** One side, and **Foster: Gentle Annie.** Robert Merrill (baritone) accompanied by Leila Edwards (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1408). \$1.

Two familiar ballads nicely sung by the star of RCA Victor's radio show. Reproduction—good.

Handel: Samson—Total Eclipse. One side, and **Haydn: The Creation**—In Native Worth. Webster Booth (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Stanford Robinson. 1-12" disc (V-C-3571). \$2.

Those persons who collect oratorio recordings will welcome these fine renditions by one of England's outstanding artists in that highly specialized field of music. Reproduction—excellent.

HARPSICHORD



Bach: Das Wohltemperirte Clavier—Preludes and Fugues I to V. Dorothy Lane (harpsichord). 3-12" discs in album. Concord Set D-6. \$7.20.

Bach: Das Wohltemperirte Clavier—Preludes and Fugues VI to IX. Dorothy Lane (harpsichord). 3-10" discs in album. Concord Set D-7. \$4.99.

To meet a consistent demand for a harpsichord recording of Bach's "The Well-Tempered Clavier,"

Concord Recordings has made available the two albums listed above. We understand that additional albums will soon be released, so that eventually all of the famous "48" may be had. Miss Lane is a capable artist and we feel sure that most music lovers will be entirely satisfied with her interpretations. The reproduction of the harpsichord on these discs has been very successfully achieved and the surfaces of the records are pleasingly quiet. If you are interested in this famous Bach work, it is worth your while to investigate these albums.

PIANO



Field: Nocturne in E major in Rondo Form. ("Midi"). One side, and **Field: Nocturne in E minor.** Denis Matthews (piano). 1-12" disc (C-72525D). \$1.25.

Very little of the music of the Irish-born composer-pianist, John Field (1782-1837), has been recorded. He was one of the most brilliant pupils of the great Clementi and was known throughout Europe as an outstanding concert pianist. David Hall states: "It was he (Field) who invented the musical form we know as the nocturne and who developed the lyric style of playing which Chopin turned to such unique advantage in both his executive and his creative work."

The present disc gives two excellent examples of Field's writing in the attractive nocturne form; the able English pianist, Denis Matthews, presents them in a highly attractive manner. The reproduction is entirely satisfactory.

Strauss: Burlesque in D minor. Four sides, and **Weber: Konzertstück in F minor, Op. 79.** Claudio Arrau (piano) with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Désiré Defauw. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1216. \$6.

Here is a pair of unhackneyed piano works, both youthful essays of their respective composers. Strauss was twenty-one when he composed *Burlesque* and Weber was twenty-nine when he began the *Konzertstück*, completing it six years later. Strauss had not yet mastered orchestral coloring, and *Burlesque* does not, therefore, abound in the flashy garb we find in his later symphonic works. It is an exuberant and often brilliant piece, with plenty of dazzling piano passages. Its only previous recording was by Elly Ney (V-11744/5).

Weber's *Konzertstück* is program music (unlike *Burlesque*), and carries a typical romantic tale containing a lady in her tower, pining for her absent knight, who eventually returns triumphantly. Weber was soloist in the first performance (1821), and the work met with great success—the early nineteenth century romantic story with its matching style of

music virtually guaranteed a rousing success. Today we can enjoy it as a clever piece of romantic program music for its charming melodies and clear, sweet harmonies, despite its dated style and story. It is divided into four sections, rather nicely contrasted. The only previous recording is an excellent one by Casadesu (Col. MX-59), which has enjoyed a steady and surprisingly large sale.

Claudio Arrau performs both of these works meticulously and with the proper spirit and approach. His technique is fluent and facile; Defauw's accompaniments are well adjusted. As the reproduction is quite good, these recordings are the preferred ones and well worth investigation. Each may be played straight through without touching the changer, as each occupies four record sides. S.

Tchaikovsky: Barcarolle in G minor (June), Op. 37a, No. 6. (From "The Months"). One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Troika en traîneaux in E (November), Op. 37a, No. 11.** (From "The Months"). José Iturbi (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0242). \$1.25.

The editor of *Nuvelist*, a musical magazine, conceived the idea of having Tchaikovsky contribute each month for a year a piano composition that would be appropriate for the current month. Tchaikovsky fulfilled his contract rather mechanically by turning out run-of-the-mine selections for the most part; however, his compositions for June and November were exceptions, and both of them have lived and appear often on concert programs. Iturbi plays these outstanding little pieces superbly on the present disc and the piano reproduction is particularly good.

Night Life on Two Pianos. Virginia Morley and Livingston Gearhart (duo-pianists). 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-746. \$4.90.

Sparkling and sophisticated tunes cleverly played by Mr. and Mrs. Gearhart, the talented couple who have been so successful in recitals and on Fred Waring's radio program.

The selections included in this album are the following: Gershwin: *I Got Rhythm*; Berlin: *Russian Lullaby*; Prokofieff: *The Love for Three Oranges—March*; Carmichael: *Stardust*; Green: *Body and Soul*; Gearhart: *Baby Boogie*; Kern: *All the Things You Are*; Arlen: *Stormy Weather*; and Braham: *Limehouse Blues*.

Brahms: Intermezzo in E flat Major, Op. 117, No. 1. One side, and **Brahms: Intermezzo in B flat Minor, Op. 117, No. 2.** Edwin Fischer (piano). 1-12" disc (V-DB-6478). \$2.63.

Numerous recordings of these lovely little pieces have been made. Rubinstein, Bachaus, and Myra Hess are among those who have played them in the recording studio. However, we doubt if anyone has played them more satisfactorily than Edwin Fischer

does on the present disc. Brahms referred to these little works as "lullabies," and Fischer has caught the spirit that we are sure the composer had in mind when he wrote them, and the results, at least to us, are most pleasing. For a quiet few minutes of charming piano music, this disc is heartily recommended. The reproduction is superb.

Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsodies Nos. 5, 6, 11, 15. Shura Cherkassky (piano). 4-10" discs in album. Vox Set No. 175. \$3.94.

Shura Cherkassky has chosen four of the not so well-known of Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsodies for this album. His performances are brilliant but always in good taste. Vox has accomplished fine piano reproduction throughout the set, and as none of these selections are readily available on domestic records, this album is a valuable addition to the repertory of recorded music.

BAND

Morton Gould Symphonic Band. Symphonic Band conducted by Morton Gould. 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-743. \$4.90.

In announcing this album, Columbia has supplied the following information, which we believe very fairly describes this item.

"The most popular form of musical ensemble in our country is that combination of woodwinds and brasses which can be heard at any parade, festival, football game or school auditorium—the band. Today there is hardly a school or college in the country which does not have two bands—a marching aggregation for athletic activities and a symphonic or concert group. Of special interest to devotees of the latter variety will be Morton Gould's exhilarating new Columbia album of pieces for the symphonic band.

"This marks probably the first recorded album of works written especially for band and played by Mr. Gould and his musicians with the same care in performance, sound and balance as if he were conducting a symphony orchestra. Thus it opens a new phase of recordings to the public.

"Departing from the limited recorded band repertoire, the album includes such stirring selections as Prokofieff's *March*, Opus 99, and *Work Song No. 1* of William Grant Still's suite, *From the Delta*. Two Gould originals, *Fourth of July* and *Home for Christmas*, represent part of the composer's *Holiday Suite*. Along more traditional band music lines are *Yankee Doodle* with setting by Morton Gould, and a Sousa work, the *Washington Post March*, rescored for modern band by Philip Lang. Percy Grainger's settings of an *Irish Tune from County Derry* and *Shepherd's Hey* for military band add an authentic folk note.

"Numerous band supervisors throughout the country have urged Mr. Gould to record some of his



original creative efforts for the high school or college organization. He has done so under the best possible conditions, and hopes that this album will prove not only good listening for the general public, but also a stimulus to the hundreds of thousands of young players in bands over the country."

Alford: On the Quarter Deck. One side, and **Alford: H. M. Jollies.** Band of H. M. Royal Marines, Plymouth Division, conducted by Major F. J. Ricketts. 1-10" disc (V-B-8934). \$1.42.

Koenig—arr. Retford: Post Horn Gallop. One side, and **Stanley: "The Chase"—Post Horn Solo.** Band of H. M. Royal Marines, Plymouth Division, conducted by Major F. J. Ricketts, featuring Cpl. W. G. Banning (trumpet). 1-10" disc (V-B-9014). \$1.42.

Especially in view of the fact that very few band records are issued in this country, there is quite a demand for English recordings in this field. The present two discs just arrived in a recent shipment and they give excellent examples of the famous Band of H. M. Royal Marines, Plymouth Division, which corresponds somewhat to our U. S. Marine Corps Band.

All of the selections are lively ones—their titles indicate the style of music one may expect. On the second disc, Corporal Banning displays some very tricky trumpet playing that is worth attention.

MISCELLANEOUS



Tchaikovsky—trans. Kreisler. Quartet No. 1 in D major, Op. 11—Andante Cantabile. One side, and **Kreisler: Liebesleid.** William Primrose (viola) accompanied by David Stimer (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0287). \$1.25.

Two chestnuts here nicely roasted by William Primrose, one of the outstanding violists of our day. Reproduction—fine.

Mozart: Rondo, K. 371. One side, and **Ravel: Pavanne pour une infante defunte.** Willem Valkenier (French Horn) with piano accompaniments by Reginald Boardman. 1-12" disc (Night Music NM-101). \$2.10.

There are few recordings available of the French horn as a solo instrument, therefore, this disc is of particular importance. Students of the instrument will find it of especial value. Mr. Valkenier is an able artist, and the recording has been faithfully accomplished on a smooth nonbreakable disc.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$9.75.

The Concert Companion. By Robert Bagar and Louis Biancolli with an introduction by Deems Taylor. xi + 868 pp. Whittlesey House (New York). Price \$7.50.

The Art of Judging Music. By Virgil Thomson. x+318+xviii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$4.25.

The Record Book (International Edition). By David Hall. xii + 1394 pp. Oliver Durrell, Inc. (New York). Price \$7.50.

Koussevitzky. By Moses Smith. 400 pp. Allen, Towne, and Heath, Inc. (New York). Price \$4.

A Dictionary of Musical Themes. Compiled by Harold Barlow and Sam Morgenstern with an introduction by John Erskine. xiii + 656 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

Records for Pleasure. By John Ball, Jr., ix + 214 pp. Rutgers University Press (New Brunswick, N. J.). Price \$2.50.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CA—Co. Art, CE—Cetra, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CT—Concertone, D—Decca, DI—Disc, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, HU—Harvard Film Service, HW—Hargall, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, L—London Gramophone, MU—Muscraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, OK—Okah, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Schrimmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.

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The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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50c per year

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus.
xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New
York). Price \$3.95.

Mr. Veinus joined RCA Victor in 1938 after receiving his M.A. in Musicology at Cornell University. He is known to many record collectors because of the authoritative and illuminating booklets which he wrote for RCA Victor for inclusion in its masterpiece albums. In 1943, Mr. Veinus entered the Army, and since his return in 1946, he has been at Columbia University, where he was awarded the Clarence Barker Fellowship for graduate study in musicology.

In 1944, Mr. Veinus's first book, *The Concerto*, was published and met with considerable success. The present volume is a further development of the theme of his first effort. It is based on the concertos that have been recorded by RCA Victor and a list of these recordings will be found at the end of the book. Descriptions of 130 concertos, from Bach to Khachaturian, are included. There are over 500 musical illustrations especially prepared for this book by Harry L. Kownatsky.

Mr. Veinus writes extremely well in a highly intelligent and cultured manner and parts of his present book might be taken as examples of prose writing at its best. One who has digested this work certainly should be able to answer any reasonable question about the origin, development, or specific work in this musical form.

The main body of the text is alphabetically arranged by composers, so that any particular concerto, that the reader may be interested in, may be quickly found. A glossary of musical terms is included, which will be of great help to those of us who are not quite as well schooled

in musical terminology as we might be.

* * *

"From a Cat's Meow to a Lion's Roar . . . a Pistol Shot to a World War"—this is the motto of Major Records, the largest manufacturer of sound effect records in the world. It would seem that there is a sizable demand for such records from amateur dramatic groups, radio stations, home movie fans and others, and so we are glad to report that the publishers of this bulletin have secured a limited supply of Major's catalog. One will be sent gratis to any reader requesting it.

Looking through the catalog, we see that twenty-five different animal sounds have been recorded, eleven different types of bells, eleven different train sounds, and literally hundreds of other assorted noises, squawks, and so forth. It would be difficult to imagine a sound not contained on these records.

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BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues published during the last sixteen years are available. The price is 5c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 125 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

ORCHESTRA

Saint-Saëns: Symphony No. 3 in C minor, Op. 78
(with organ). Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Charles Muench, with Eduard Nies-Berger (organ). 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-747. \$6.

With this album we have the American record debut of Charles Muench, who has been so favorably received in New York and Boston, and who will become Koussevitzky's successor in the fall of 1949. Mr.



Muench is familiar to most of us through his English Decca records, as well as his Philharmonic broadcasts. His musicianship is exemplary and his style is usually something good to talk about. He is one of the greatest interpreters of French music, and he does exceedingly well with many other schools of music. It will be a pleasure, as well as musically profitable, to welcome him to this country permanently.

Muench has revived an old favorite with surpassing elegance in his performance of the Saint-Saëns "Organ Symphony." This grandiose piece of romantic music is very effective in its rhapsodic way, and grinds on to an impressive climax. The record labels correctly list it as being in two movements: *Adagio* and *Allegro moderato*. However, it includes practically the traditional four movements; the first serves as an introduction to the *Adagio*, and the *Scherzo* is connected with the *Finale*. It has some tantalizing themes that stick with the listener for some time after he has heard the work even once. It is scored for a rather large orchestra, including piano and organ. As the organ has parts of prominence, the work has been nicknamed "the organ symphony." While called his third, this work is in reality Saint-Saëns' fifth symphony, two youthful works having been discarded.

The present performance is all that one could hope for, easily surpassing the old (and only previous) recording by Coppola (Vic. DM-100). The reproduction is excellent, especially its resonance, which is just right and very realistic. S.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 7 in A, Op. 92. National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 5-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-55. \$11.55.

Having heard, and greatly admired, many of Fistoulari's lesser efforts with overtures and short works, we tackled this work with relish. The first movement proved very rewarding. The second movement was also well done, if a shade slow. The third movement was somewhat disappointing because of its frequent lack of control on the part of the conductor, and the fourth movement was also marred by rhythmic unsteadiness. Feeling a bit disappointed with Fistoulari's handling of a work of major proportions, we dusted off the Toscanini set (Vic. DM-317) and began comparing sides. Toscanini's version of this remarkable symphony has always been one of our favorite examples of the maestro at his best, and has come to be our measuring stick for all performances of the work. A side by side comparison with Fistoulari only served to strengthen our previous opinion. Arturo outdistances Anatole throughout the entire course. The third and fourth movements are noticeably superior as Toscanini molds them. His fast tempo of the trio of the *Scherzo* has annoyed many persons, but it is entirely logical to us. Fistoulari plays the fourth movement noticeably faster than Toscanini (he also does the third a little faster), but he gains nothing

by it, for Toscanini's incisive rhythm is much more infectious.

It goes without saying that the New York Philharmonic of the era of Toscanini's set was far beyond Fistoulari's orchestra in every respect. Fistoulari should never have approved some of these sides considering their inaccuracies in the brass section, particularly the horns. And curiously enough, his orchestra is tuned to a higher pitch than Toscanini's. Ormandy's interpretation, with the Philadelphia Orchestra (Col. MM-557), is well disciplined with superb finish and quality on the orchestra's part, but not too exciting for Ormandy's part—it is better controlled than Fistoulari, but not as brilliant as Toscanini. The reproduction of the new Decca set is excellent, with the Kingsway Hall acoustics supplying their inimitable realism. Ormandy's set is quite well reproduced, and Toscanini's is the runner-up, though good for its age. All things considered, especially price, we still take Toscanini. S.

Borodin: Symphony No. 2 in B minor. Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Désiré Defauw. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1225. \$4.75.

It is a pleasure to find Mr. Defauw well cast with congenial material, for when he is good he is very good, indeed. His approach to the Borodin *Symphony No. 2* is entirely convincing, he achieves some brilliant and powerful moments, and he puts this uneven work across with great persuasion. Never having cared too much for this symphony, we admit Defauw just about "sold" it to us (on the second hearing). We feel he might have been a little brisker and lighter in the second movement *Scherzo*, but it is at least very clean and transparent, which is not always the case with this difficult bit of scoring. The plangent opening movement has impressive strength, the closing movement is exuberant and triumphant, while the sombre third movement, *Andante*, is quietly colorful and nicely contrasted. The reproduction of this set is spacious and revealing, and sets off Defauw's work with every possible advantage. Altogether this is a mighty fine album, which should find a warm welcome with the sizable following this symphony seems to enjoy through the years. Previous recordings of the work are two negligible affairs, an ancient one by Albert Coates (Vic. DM-113, withdrawn), and a most miserably reproduced one by Mitropoulos and Minneapolis (Col. MM-528), neither of which are any competition for Defauw.

Being deeply engrossed in *Prince Igor* during the six years it took him to finish his *Second Symphony*, it is not surprising to find much of the same atmosphere, color, and savagery in the symphony that characterizes the opera. Liszt was completely captivated with the score and lavished great praise upon it. Borodin's fellow-composers of the nationalistic movement, such as Balakirev and Rimsky were equally enthusias-

tic about it. This gifted man deserved such a success.
S.

Falla: The Three Cornered Hat—Three Dances.

The Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Alceo Galliera. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-297. \$3.50.

Columbia's excellently interpreted, but anciently reproduced, album of *The Three Cornered Hat* by Enrique Arbos and the Madrid Symphony (MX-38) is now replaced by a new and superior reproduction. This set also serves to introduce to these shores Alceo Galliera, an Italian-born musician who has achieved a good reputation in England and on the Continent although he is only in his early thirties. He has worked with Richard Strauss, conducting the master's tone-poems and operas.

Of the several recordings he has made in England, Columbia chose this one for domestic issue. It shows Galliera to be a highly competent director. It seems, however, to lack that final spark of fire which makes a good performance great and memorable. We have heard more persuasive readings of this lively score. Galliera's reading is clean and well disciplined, and will undoubtedly fill the bill for a majority of those who enjoy this suite from the ballet. Galliera misses the essence of this music just as Fiedler does in his recording (Vic. DM-505). Both men do the music well, but the Spaniard Arbos caught the spirit better.

Considering the fact that these three dances have come to be a part of the concert repertoire, it is understandable that most conductors do not have the ballet itself in mind when they direct these excerpts. And indeed they form a brilliant, if brief, bit of pleasure whenever programmed, for they are good concert music in themselves, without benefit of the ballet.

The Three Cornered Hat is well worth your investigation if you are not yet acquainted with it. The reproduction of the present set is very fine, and surfaces on our copy quite smooth.
S.

Diamond: Music for Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet." Five sides, and **Diamond: Overture to "The Tempest."** The Little Orchestra Society conducted by Thomas K. Scherman. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-751. \$4.75.

Mr. Diamond's announced intention in writing this suite was "to convey as fully and yet as economically as possible the innate beauty and pathos of Shakespeare's great drama without resorting to a large orchestral canvas and a definite musical form, such as we find in the music of Tchaikovsky and Prokofiev on the same subject." Mr. Diamond, born in Rochester in 1915, was always inspired by the plays of Shakespeare and planned to write music especially for them. His first opportunity came in 1944 when Margaret Webster invited him to write the score for her production of *The Tempest*, the overture of which

we have in this album as a filler. It is said that the score was notably successful, although the short overture does not give us much basis for evaluation. In 1947 Mr. Scherman asked Diamond to write something for the newly organized Little Orchestra Society. The Romeo and Juliet music was the result, and was, of course, first performed by Mr. Scherman, to whom the score is dedicated.

The suite is divided into five rather short sections: Overture, Balcony Scene, Romeo and Friar Laurence, Juliet and her Nurse, and Death of Romeo and Juliet. The Overture does not appeal to us very much. The Balcony Scene becomes, with repeated hearings, effective and appropriate music. Romeo and Friar Laurence is sweetly contrived music, reminiscent at times to us of Delius. Juliet and her Nurse is rather good portrait painting, and Death of Romeo and Juliet is elegiac in an angular sort of way, yet it carries a properly mournful effect. This music has to be heard several times before a full appreciation of the composer's intentions can be enjoyed. We are not ashamed to say we were not too much impressed with the first hearing; but then, neither was Brahms, in his day, too wildly acclaimed on first hearing. Those who wish a rehashing of Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet* will be everlastingly disappointed in Diamond's essay. Those who wish a fresh approach may easily find this music of substance and of interest.

Mr. Scherman's chamber orchestra, The Little Orchestra Society, was founded in 1947, and enjoyed a highly successful season in New York City, where they presented a series of concerts, each one of which featured a contemporary novelty in addition to un-hackneyed masterpieces of the past. They are a proficient group, judging by these records, which are splendidly recorded.
S.

Handel—arr. Kindler: The Faithful Shepherd—Suite. National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hans Kindler. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1224. \$3.50.

Seven years ago, in August 1941, Columbia released an album by Sir Thomas Beecham (MM-458) which contained a suite drawn from *Il Pastor Fido*, *The Faithful Shepherd*. Beecham's arrangement included eight sections, while Kindler's new suite includes only five. Beecham's set met with high enthusiasm in these columns, and was well received everywhere. Irving Kolodin made this comment, which we think very apt, in his recent book, "it is a sensation of pure delight, in which the contact with the music is immediate and inescapable, as if no intermediary existed between Handel and the listener."

And it is just in that sense that Kindler's *Faithful Shepherd* is not the equal of Beecham's. Kindler achieves broader planes of string tone, more lush effects, and a generally rich and plushy tapestry all through his suite. But the Handelian style is lost, or at least overshadowed, by this treatment. We would

not say that it is not nice music, easy to listen to; but we prefer Handel not so heavily enameled. Incidentally, Kindler's work might easily be mistaken for Stokowski's, for the orchestral fabric is very characteristic. If you revel in these gorgeous effects you will like Kindler's set; if you prefer the freshness and simplicity of Handel for what it is, you will accept only Beecham's album. To us, the grace and charm of Beecham's Handel recordings have always been a high spot of the recorded repertoire.

Il Pastor Fido was not a success in its first performances in 1712, but Handel revised the score years later and in 1734 the new version met with better acceptance. The second version had a prologue titled *Terpsichore*; it is from this ballet addition that Kindler selected and arranged the movements of his suite. The reproduction of this set is brilliant and spacious. S.

Glazounov: From the Middle Ages, Op. 79. Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fabien Sevitzyk. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1222. \$4.75.

With this album, Victor adds another to its impressive list of Glazounov recordings, other recent items including *The Seasons* and *Raymonda*. It may be fairly said at the outset that *From the Middle Ages* is not as interesting a work as either *The Seasons* or *Raymonda*. This orchestral suite, written in 1903, uses to some extent Russian ecclesiastical modes. Its inspiration is medieval romance and chivalry. Divided into four sections, Prelude, Scherzo, Serenade of the Troubadour, and The Crusaders, this suite is a typical example of Glazounov's sound craftsmanship. It is also typical of his inability to sustain interest. Glazounov composed with great ease, but in his case, being prolific was a curse, for his works, by and large, lacked expressiveness and genuine appeal. Their lack of popularity today is hardly undeserved. The final section of this suite is a good example. The Crusaders is, according to the accompanying notes, supposed to be filled with resounding climaxes and orchestral sonority suggestive of the invincible spirit and mettle of medieval warriors. We could imagine nothing of the sort during the unfolding of this music.

Fabien Sevitzyk presumably plays this music for what it is worth, but he does not do any more. A few assists here and there by way of overstatement and dramatic emphasis might bring more of this music to life. The orchestra plays well, and the reproduction is fair but not as good as other contemporary Victor efforts. S.

Elgar: Enigma Variations, Op. 36. Seven sides, and **Elgar: Bavarian Dance, Op. 27, No. 2** ("Lullaby"). The Hallé Orchestra conducted by John Barbirolli. 4-12" discs in album (V-C-7702 to V-C-7705) (Automatic sequence). \$7.98.

We have always been very fond of *Enigma* and

have particularly enjoyed Barbirolli's performances of it, which occurred quite regularly over the air when he conducted the New York Philharmonic. It is a pity that Columbia or Victor did not record him in that work when they had the opportunity. But one finally arrives from England, made with the orchestra with which Barbirolli is currently enjoying a great success.

Barbirolli has a way with this score that is completely logical and convincing. He understands it perfectly and has great sympathy for it. Also, he has this work thoroughly in his mind, and can therefore go on to achieve some virtuosically effects with the orchestra, which he does heroically. The Hallé Orchestra has always been a fine organization and their playing here is of a high order. The string tone is broad and sonorous at times, lush and sweet at other times, always versatile. The reproduction is deeply etched and bold and seemingly very close to the listener. We rather like it, and find it persuasive.

Theme and variations is a form which always appeals to us. Elgar's portraits make superb variations and intensely interesting listening. The contrasts are remarkable, some sweet, some piquant, some broad, some boisterous; everything is here, capped with a gorgeous finale. Elgar's own interpretation of this work was recorded years ago; those who own it would certainly not replace it, for it is tops. Anyone else will do well to acquire the present set. Adrian Boult, Sir Henry Wood, and Hamilton Harty also have made mettlesome recordings of this work, but the new set tops them all for reproduction. S.

Paisiello—trans. Lualdi: Il Balletto della Regina Proserpina (sei tempi di danza). Orchestra da Camera del R. Conservatorio di S. Pietro a Majella (Naples) conducted by Adriano Lualdi. 2-12" discs (V-DB-05357 and V-DB-05358). \$5.25.

Giovanni Paisiello (1740-1816) is practically unknown today although he was a famous musician in his day, having been court conductor for both Catherine the Great and Napoleon. His opera *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* was highly regarded and enjoyed great popularity for a quarter of a century until Rossini's operatic version of that story was produced in 1816.

Adriano Lualdi, who conducts the present recording, selected one of Paisiello's ballets and arranged it for modern chamber orchestra, and has recorded it very nicely on these two discs. The music is very definitely dated but will be of interest to scholars of 18th century Italian music. The present records arrived in a recent shipment from Italy.

Dvorák—arr. Szell: Slavonic Dances. The Cleveland Orchestra conducted by George Szell. 3-12" discs in album, Columbia Set MM-756. \$4.75.

Numerous recordings of these well-known selections are available but we doubt whether any of them

is more attractive than the ones in the present album. George Szell, who before the war was for many years Musical Director of the Opera in Prague, is particularly well qualified to interpret the works of his compatriot, Dvorák. In fact, Mr. Szell uses his own arrangements for these recorded performances. The composer wrote these dances for piano duets. The Cleveland Orchestra enters into the spirit of these fascinating pieces and under Szell's able direction the results are highly satisfactory. Reproduction—excellent.

The *Slavonic Dances* included in the present album are: No. 1 in C major, Op. 46, No. 1; No. 3 in A-flat major, Op. 46, No. 3; No. 8 in G minor, Op. 46, No. 8; No. 10 in E minor, Op. 72, No. 2; and No. 15 in C major, Op. 72, No. 7.

Ravel: Bolero. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1220. \$3.50. (Also available in Vinylite, DV-18, \$5.)

Koussevitzky's earlier recording of the popular Ravel's *Bolero* has enjoyed a steady sale since it was first released a number of years ago. We can see no particular reason for this gifted conductor's spending his valuable time making another recorded version of it, when he might have been making any of a number of items that are crying for a modern recording. However, here it is, and in the present version the music is spread over four sides (the first recording took three sides).

Liszt: Les Préludes. L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Enrique Jorda. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA 54. \$5.25.

Several recordings have been made of this spectacular Liszt symphonic poem but none of them approach this absolutely thrilling Decca *fff* version. It is orchestral reproduction at its best. This may not be great music, but this is surely a great recording.

Phillips: Skyscraper Fantasy. One side, and **Curzon: March of the Bowmen** (From "Robin Hood Suite"). Charles Williams and his Concert Orchestra. 1-12" disc (C-72527D). \$1.25.

Skyscraper Fantasy is the first work of the English composer, Donald Phillips, to be recorded; it is very definitely background music for the cinema, yet tuneful and pleasant. Coupled with the rollicking *March of the Bowmen*, this is a disc sure to please nearly everyone.

Boccherini: Quartet in E, Op. 13, No. 5—Minuet. One side, and **Bolzon: Minuet.** Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-10" disc (V-10-1418). \$1.

Two charming little pieces that make pleasant listening for a summer evening—nicely played by

the Boston "Pops" and splendidly recorded by RCA Victor.

Carnival Tropicana. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-753. \$6.

Kostelanetz has selected ten typical Latin-American tunes for this lively album and presents his own arrangements of them—music from "south of the border" in the style of Kostelanetz. Among the selections will be found the ever-popular *Malagueña*, *Cielito Lindo*, *La Golondrina*, and *Siboney*.

We enjoyed this light and pleasing music very much—grand stuff for a warm summer evening, splendidly recorded.

R. Strauss: Salome—Salomes Tanz der sieben Schleier. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (V-12-0344). \$1.25.

Sir Thomas presents a "refined" version of this seductive and sensuous selection that so shocked our forebears shortly after the turn of the century. We rather prefer Rodzinski's rendition, which he made with the Cleveland Orchestra some six or seven years ago (C-11781D). His is a bit more barbaric, with greater stress on the oriental rhythms. To us it is more realistic. Both recordings should be readily available for comparison.

Smetana: The Bartered Bride—Overture. The Sadler's Wells Orchestra conducted by Lawrence Collingwood. 1-12" disc (C-72588D). \$1.25.

Numerous recordings have been made of this popular overture; the present version compares favorably with the best of them. It is bright and pleasing music, and if this selection is not in your library, we suggest that you listen to this fine recording of it.

Victor Young: Arizona Sketches, Manhattan Concerto, Travelin' Light, In a November Garden. Artist Recording Orchestra conducted by Victor Young. 3-12" discs in album. Artist Records Set JY-11. \$7.35.

This album contains three orchestral selections by Victor Young, and the *Manhattan Concerto* for piano and orchestra by the same composer. In the latter, Harry Sikam is the piano soloist. The composer conducts all of the selections.

Victor Young is known to most of us for the musical scores that he has provided for many outstanding films, including "For Whom the Bell Tolls," and "Frenchman's Creek." He is also known to many record buyers for his numerous recordings. There is nothing of great interest in the selections that he has chosen for this album—all of them are pleasing enough in the field of light music, and as they will probably be new to most listeners, it is possible that

this album will appeal to those who would like to add some new tuneful music to their collections. *Manhattan Concerto* is reminiscent of the late George Gershwin.

The reproduction is satisfactory throughout, and the discs are made of a non-breakable material and have silent surfaces.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Beethoven: Quartet No. 6 in B-flat major, Op. 18, No. 6. Budapest String Quartet. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-754. \$4.75.

This is a very important album because it contains the only presently available domestic recording of this lovely Beethoven quartet. The Victor catalog formerly listed a recording by the Coolidge Quartet but this has been deleted. Therefore, those music lovers who have been waiting to complete their collection of Beethoven quartets will surely welcome this new release.

We can think of no group better qualified to record this work than the Budapest players and we are sure that all discerning music lovers will be highly satisfied with their rendition. The reproduction is excellent.

Schubert: Trio No. 2 in E flat major, Op. 100. Alma Trio. 5-12" discs in album. Allegro Set AR-1. \$7.25.

We cannot become overly enthusiastic about this work as a piece of chamber music; we do not think that it rates with the best of Schubert's compositions in that field. We are, however, very much impressed with the playing of the Alma Trio, who made their Town Hall debut in New York during February of the present year, after a series of very successful concerts in California. This Trio, consisting of Roman Totenberg (violin), Adolph Baller (piano) and Gabor Rejto (violoncello), came into being when these artists were invited to spend a summer at Yehudi Menuhin's Alma estate in the Santa Cruz Mountains in California. To our mind this is a superb chamber music group and we are looking forward to more recordings by these excellent artists.

CONCERTO



Khachaturian: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra.

David Oistrakh (violin) and the Russian State Symphony Orchestra conducted by Alexander Gauk. 5-12" discs in album. Mercury Set DM-10. \$7.84.

The December 1947 issue of THE NEW RECORDS carried a review of the Khachaturian *Violin Concerto* performed by Louis Kaufman with the Santa Monica Symphony (Concert Hall AN). This set was found to be quite good except for the fact that the orches-

tral support seemed distant because of faulty microphone placement.

The chief point of interest, to us, in the present set is the opportunity to hear David Oistrakh, who is reputedly Russia's finest fiddler. Judging from this performance we would say he is an artist of tremendous talent. Tonally, technically, and artistically he is a violinist of great accomplishment, one of whom any country might be justly proud. His performance of the Khachaturian *Violin Concerto* should naturally be close to his heart, for this fine work is dedicated to him, and indeed he plays it with consummate finish. The Russian Orchestra which accompanies is a good band skillfully conducted by Gauk. The reproduction is not equal to current domestic issues, but is satisfactory, with the violin tone being very well captured. This set was recorded in Russia, and is being issued here by arrangement with Compass Record Company. Mercury's surfaces are fair, although some of the noise may have been inherited from Russia. The album which houses these records is one of the most beautiful we have ever seen.

As for the Concerto itself, we like it immensely. Most persons will like the opening phrases at once for the devilishly simple but appealing tune that appears. From there on the work holds your interest for one reason or another, often including violinistic pyrotechnics of an astonishing nature. The whole work is rhythmically interesting, and the finale is exciting with a rousing climax. We think it is great stuff.

S.

OPERA



Sorozábal: La Eterna Cancion. Purita Jimenez, Enriqueta Serrano, Anselmo Fernandez, Manuel Alares, Manuel Gas, Guillermo Palomar, Mariano Ibars, and the Grand Symphony Orchestra of the First Palace Theater of Barcelona, conducted by Pablo Sorozábal. 7-10" discs and 2-12" discs in album. (Automatic sequence.) Iberia Set M-3. \$11.54.

Arrieta: Marina. Mercedes Capsir (soprano), Hipólito Lazaro (tenor), Jose Mardones (bass), Marcos Redondo (baritone), and Chorus and Symphony Orchestra conducted by Daniel Monterio. 12-12" discs in two albums. Iberia Sets ZG-2 and ZG-3. \$19.71.

These two Spanish recordings by a new company, Discos Iberia, may prove interesting to those who like Iberian rhythms or are curious about Spanish forms of entertainment.

Both "La Eterna Cancion" and "Marina" are what are known throughout the length and breadth of Spain as *zarzuelas*. The *zarzuela* is a form of operetta which combines song, dance and spoken dialogue. The name is derived from the royal palace of La Zarzuela,

for it was here in the 17th century that the so-called "Fiestas de Zarzuela" were given for the entertainment of Philip IV, King of Spain.

La Eterna Cancion, which means "The Eternal Song," is a bright, thoroughly idiomatic little piece, and it would be apparent even to the most uninitiated, after playing the first record-side, that this could only be the music of Spain. The half dozen artists are not singers of international standing, but they sound fully alive and competent in this pretty music. Furthermore the timbre of their voices is obviously suited to Sevilla and Sorozabal's sprightly strains.

Marina by Pascual Juan Emilio Arrieta y Corraera (1823-1894) is one of the best known of some 50 works from the pen of this prolific composer. The present set was formerly issued as Columbia MOP-11.

Marina makes considerable demands on the cast and consequently we here have assembled a quartet of Spain's most celebrated singers: Mercedes Capsir, a coloratura, who has made a great career in Italy and elsewhere; Hipolito Lazaro, the celebrated tenor who sang at the Metropolitan Opera in 1917; the great Spanish basso, José Mardones, who also appeared at the Metropolitan, and Marcos Redondo, a well-known Spanish baritone.

These singers are in excellent form, and Mardones had certainly one of the greatest bass voices the world has ever heard. With the knowledge that Mardones died on May 4, 1932, the fact becomes apparent that this set was recorded before that date. Reproduction is extremely clear, when one considers that it stems from the early days of electrical recording.

There were no explanatory notes with these sets, so that what they are all about is more or less a sealed book, but for those who like typical Spanish music presented with verve and zest, these records are well-worth investigating. For those who like four glamorous voices singing solos, duets, trios and quartets, *Marina* will be undoubtedly a tonal delight.

A catalog listing all of the Discos Iberia pressings may be obtained from the publishers of this bulletin for 15¢ (postpaid in U. S. A.).

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Halevy: La Juive—Rachel, quand du Seigneur (Act IV). One side, and **Bizet: Les Pecheurs de Perles**—A cette voix quel trouble agitait tout mon être (recitative); Je crois entendre encore (romanza). (Both sung in French.) Richard Tucker (tenor) with the Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Association conducted by Emil Cooper. 1-12" disc (C-72577D). \$1.25.

Last summer Mr. Tucker sang at the Verona Opera Festival; the first Metropolitan Opera tenor to be invited to sing in Italy since the war. At that time he appeared with great success in both *La Juive* and *Les Pecheurs de Perles*, neither of which are presently in the Metropolitan repertoire.

On the present disc, Mr. Tucker's glorious young voice of true *bel canto* quality shows to great advantage. The reproduction has been most successfully accomplished.

Charpentier: Louise—Depuis le jour où je me suis donnée (Act III). One side, and **Offenbach: Les Contes de Hoffmann**—Elle a fui, la tourterelle (Act IV). (Sung in French.) Nadine Conner (soprano) with Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Max Rudolf. 1-12" disc (C-72540D). \$1.25.

Columbia offers another disc containing operatic recordings made on the stage of the Metropolitan. While Miss Conner participated in Columbia's albums of *Carmen* and *Hansel and Gretel*, this is her first individual record. Although Miss Conner's is not a voice of much power, it is pleasing in its true lyric quality and her many admirers will probably welcome the present disc.

CHORAL



Vaughan Williams: Mass in G minor. The Fleet Street Choir conducted by T. B. Lawrence. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA 57. \$7.35.

Ralph Vaughan Williams' *Mass in G Minor* was composed in 1923. It is a fine example of this composer's simple and ever spiritual approach. Sung *a cappella* by the fine Fleet Street Choir under the direction of T. B. Lawrence, the *Mass in G Minor* enjoys superior and sensitive recording through Decca's now-famous *ffrr* method.

The music is of great purity of line, often reminding one of Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis* in its atmosphere of the cloister, in its feeling of being completely withdrawn from the hubbub and striving of the world.

The *Mass in G Minor* is short, for it is neatly contained on six record sides. It is as much of a "must" for admirers of Vaughan Williams' distinguished talents as it is for music lovers who enjoy fine choral singing. D.

Hymns. Phil Spitalny and his Hour of Charm All-Girl Choir. 3-10" discs in album. Charm Records Set No. 3. \$3.85.

For some time one of the features of the Hour of Charm radio program has been the singing of a favorite hymn which had been requested by the radio audience. The present album contains eight hymns that have been most often called for. They are: *Faith of Our Fathers*; *Abide With Me*; *When He Calls Me I Will Answer*; *Now the Day is Over*; *Rock of Ages*; *Doxology*; *Sweet Hour of Prayer*; and *When the Roll is Called Up Yonder*.

Many among the vast group who never miss an Hour of Charm program will probably be glad to

know that this attractive album is now available.

Song About Lieutenant Chikchiroff. One side, and **Song About Pakhom.** (Both arr. Jaroff). Don Cossack Chorus conducted by Serge Jaroff. 1-10" disc (C-4503M). \$1.

Typical Don Cossack numbers sung with their usual spirit—nice for those who are interested in such choral work. Well recorded.

VOCAL



Czech Folk Songs ("Songs of Lidice"). (Sung in Czechoslovakian.) Jarmila Novotna (soprano) accompanied by Jan Masaryk (piano). 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-936. \$4.75.

This album was originally released in April 1943. It was dropped from the catalog and was recently re-issued. When it first appeared, we covered it with a rather lengthy review from which we have selected the following paragraphs.

There is an impressive foreword, inside the cover of this album of Czechoslovakian folk-songs, by Jan Masaryk, Vice-Premier of that unfortunate country. The album furthermore marks the American debut of the charming Jarmila Novotna on records.

The collection has been entitled *The Songs of Lidice*, for these songs were all to be heard in that city. Musically, this collection of folk songs is rather parallel to the *Haugtussa Cycle* of Norwegian Songs by Grieg, which was so beautifully interpreted by Mme. Flagstad for RCA Victor a couple of seasons ago. It cannot be said that these songs have quite the variety of mood that the Grieg album contained. Here the mood is prevalingly nostalgic—a feeling of longing and sadness is apparent in most of the fifteen selections. To play all fifteen songs, one after another, is undoubtedly in the nature of an endurance test.

Mme. Novotna sings these selections with warmth and deep feeling. Her tone-quality on the present records is far lovelier than that which one hears her project from the opera stage, and she is admirably recorded. Vice-President Masaryk, himself, supplies the accompaniment, and both he and Mme. Novotna create an atmosphere of sincerity and undeniable appeal.

Schumann: Liederkreis, Op. 39. Helen Traubel (soprano) accompanied by Coenraad Bos (piano). 5-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-752. \$5.90.

Helen Traubel ably demonstrates on these discs that in addition to being a distinguished operatic artist she is also a lieder singer of rare ability. We were greatly impressed with her renditions of these lovely Schumann songs.

Schumann composed two volumes of songs in 1840 to both of which he gave the title *Liederkreis* (Song Cycle). The first (Opus 24) was musical settings to poems by Heine. The second (Opus 39), which Miss Traubel records in its entirety for the first time on these discs, is based on a set of twelve poems by Eichendorff. Among them will be found several of Schumann's best-beloved songs, such as *Waldesgesprach*, *Mondnacht* and *Fruelingsnacht*.

Lovers of fine lieder will certainly find this album a very attractive item. Of particular interest is the fact that the German text of each song with a free English translation will be found on the inside covers of this album.

Songs of the Auvergne (arr. Cantaloube). Madeleine Grey (soprano) with orchestra conducted by M. Elie Cohen. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-758. \$4.75.

In re-issuing these unusual records, which have been missing from the catalog for years (they were first released in the early 1930's), Columbia is responding to numerous requests from persons who have heard them over the air or in the homes of their friends.

In announcing this re-issue Columbia supplies the following note:

"The spirit of the picturesque, romantic and somberly beautiful French province of Auvergne has been superbly captured in these eleven folk songs arranged for voice and orchestra by Marie-Joseph Cantaloube de Malaret, and interpreted by the distinguished French soprano Madeleine Grey. The songs are sung in the peculiar and fascinating dialect of the Auvergne; and their bold, invigorating rhythms reflect the robust and independent native spirit of that district. There is the *Laio de rotso*, a melody fresh as water from a mountain spring; *Bresairola*, a lullaby of shepherd folk; and the plaint of a man burdened with a querulous wife, *Malurous qu'o uno fenno*—each one a dramatic entity."

Falla: Seven Popular Spanish Songs. Carmen Torres (soprano) accompanied by John Newmark (piano). 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1223. \$3.50.

In this album we have a very worthy addition to the repertory of recorded music. Conchita Supervia made a complete recording of these seven songs many years ago, but her records are no longer available. We are happy to state that Carmen Torres' renditions are good substitutes, and to those music lovers who are interested in these songs we do not hesitate to recommend them.

Falla has taken seven genuine folk songs of his country and supplied them with original piano ac-

companiments which fit perfectly the vocal line and make each of them a real musical gem. Each is dramatic in its way, and all of them are based on the elemental problems of the average Spanish peasant. For a better appreciation of them RCA Victor has supplied the Spanish text of each together with a free English translation. The songs mean very much more when we know the ideas the singer is trying to impart.

This album will have a limited appeal, but to those who are interested it will be a mighty attractive item.

Gilbert and Sullivan Favorites. Soloists, with the Radio City Music Hall Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Charles Previn. 4-10" discs in album. Pilotone Set No. 201. \$5.50.

Victor Herbert Melodies. Soloists, with the Radio City Music Hall Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Charles Previn. 4-10" discs in album. Pilotone Set No. 202. \$5.50.

Pilotone continues with its fine series of Vinylite recordings. This month it releases two albums by the Radio City Hall Chorus and Orchestra, under the direction of Charles Previn, with a group of notable soloists. Among the vocalists we may mention, Hugh Thompson and John Baker of the Metropolitan, June Forrest of Radio City Music Hall, Harriet O'Rourke, whose singing of the *Italian Street Song* in the Victor Herbert album is an outstanding accomplishment, Elaine Malvin, Robert Marshall, Lucile Cummings and Nino Ventura.

In addition to the *Italian Street Song*, the Herbert album contains: *I'm Falling in Love With Someone*; *Gypsy Love Song*; *When You're Away*; *Romany Life*; *Thine Alone*; *Sweethearts*; and *Neapolitan Love Song*.

The Gilbert and Sullivan album contains twelve selections, some of them quite short, among which may be mentioned: *Poor Little Buttercup*; *Fair Moon, to Thee I Sing*; *A Wand'ring Minstrel, I*; *Loudly Let the Trumpet Bray*; and *Model Major General*.

Beloved Church Solos. Laura Stover (soprano), J. Alden Edkins (bass), Lydia Summers (contralto) and Harold Haugh (tenor) with organ accompaniments. 4-10" discs in album. Bibletone Set U. \$4.73.

Bibletone has selected four singers who are noted for their church singing and each of them was given two solos to record. Miss Stover sings *Great Peace Have They and How Beautiful Upon the Mountain*; Mr. Edkins *Calvary* and *Open the Gates of the Temple*; Miss Summers *The City Foursquare* and *Ninety-first Psalm*; and Mr. Haugh *That Sweet Story of Old and I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say*. We rather feel that those who are interested in music of this character will think that the choice of selections is good and that the artists on the whole are adequate. Miss Stover seems a bit too dramatic to

us; her voice lacks the warmth that is required for such sacred selections. The others seem quite at home with the numbers assigned to them. All of the soloists would have fared better if they had had even a semblance of support from the accompanying organ. That instrument, for the most part, sounded like a rumble or a grumble somewhere away off in the distance.

J. Strauss, Jr.: Vocal Waltzes. Miliza Korjus (soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-1221. \$3.50.

Miss Korjus' first album of Strauss Waltzes, issued by RCA Victor several years ago, enjoyed a wide popularity and the present set is said to have been prepared to meet a persistent demand for more such recordings. Miss Korjus, while she is certainly not an Erna Sack, is a coloratura of considerable ability, with a highly developed sense of pitch, and she makes these familiar Strauss selections quite thrilling as she presents them on the present discs.

The selections in this album are: *Artist's Life*; *Roses From the South*; *Vienna Blood*; and *Treasure Waltz*.

Speaks: Sylvia. One side, and **Logan: Pale Moon.** Thomas Hayward (tenor) accompanied by Frank La Forge (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1426). \$1.

Tenor Thomas Hayward, a 1945 Metropolitan Opera Auditions of the Air winner with two seasons with the New York City Opera Company to his credit as well as innumerable concert and radio appearances, makes his debut on RCA Victor Red Seal records in two beloved melodic favorites as familiar to music lovers as they are to singers. They are Oley Speaks' *Sylvia*, and *Pale Moon* by Frederick Knight Logan.

Mr. Hayward has a pleasing voice of rare purity, and he presents these simple ballads in a most artistic manner with a fine sense of refinement. He is ably accompanied by the veteran pianist, Frank La Forge, who has probably been making recordings as long as any artist presently appearing in the recording studio. We recall that he supplied accompaniments for Gadske in the very early days of the phonograph and was one of the first artists to make solo piano recordings.

Selections from "Big City." Lotte Lehmann (soprano) with Orchestra and St. Luke's Choristers conducted by Robert Armbruster. 2-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-1226. \$3.

We have not seen "Big City" but we understand that Lotte Lehmann is splendid in the character of "Mrs. Feldman," a simple, kind-hearted mother who handles all the problems of life in an easy fashion. The present album contains the following songs that are featured in the picture: *Lullaby* (Brahms); *Traumerei* (Schumann); *God Bless America* (Berlin);

and *The Kerry Dance* (Molloy).

Whether you have seen the picture or not, we rather feel that you will find this little album attractive. It is nothing of great importance but each of Miss Lehmann's renditions has a certain emotional appeal that a lot of persons are going to find quite enjoyable.

Nobody Knows the Trouble I See (Spiritual—arr. Burleigh). One side, and **MacGimsey: Shadrach**. Robert Merrill (baritone) with Russ Case and his Orchestra. 1-10" disc (V-10-1427). \$1.

O' What a Beautiful City (Spiritual—arr. Boatner). One side, and **City Called Heaven** (Spiritual—arr. Johnson). Camilla Williams (soprano) accompanied by Ralph Berkowitz (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1425). \$1.

On these two discs we have Negro spirituals sung in two entirely different styles. Robert Merrill sings his just as we would expect that he would—each word comes out crystal clear—straight unembellished renditions. Russ Case supplies some tricky accompaniments which he may think are appropriate but which we think are pretty tawdry.

We were very much disappointed in Miss Williams' record. Her diction is poor and there is a tightness in her voice that certainly detracts from the enjoyment one might otherwise get from her renditions.

We rather feel that it might have been just as well if neither of these discs had been issued.

Boatner: On Ma Journey. One side, and **Johnson: My Good Lord Done Been Here**. Carol Brice (contralto) accompanied by Jonathan Brice (piano). 1-10" disc (C-17524D). \$1.

The celebrated Negro contralto, Carol Brice, has made several very successful albums for Columbia including Mahler's *Songs of a Wayfarer* and Falla's *El Amor Brujo* but this is her first disc containing spirituals. For it, she has selected two that are usually found on her concert programs. She sings them in a style of her own, which may or may not appeal to you. We suggest that you hear this one before you purchase it. Miss Brice's brother, Jonathan, supplies appropriate accompaniments.

American Ballads and Folk Songs, Vol. 2. John Jacob Niles, with dulcimer accompaniment. 3-10" discs in album. Disc Set No. 733. \$3.94.

Another album of American folk songs by the celebrated authority, John Jacob Niles, for those who are interested in folklore of this nature, is released by Disc this month. Such recordings appeal to a limited but very enthusiastic minority of music lovers. The reproduction and record surfaces are satisfactory.

This album contains: *Who Killed Cock Robin; John Henry; Frog Went Courtin'; The Lass From*

the Low Countree; Go 'Way From My Window; and Jack O' Diamonds.

Victor Herbert. Lois Butler (soprano) with Paul Weston and his Orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. Capitol Set BD-30. \$3.15.

This album is purely a novelty. Lois Butler, the fourteen-year-old girl who has been featured on several important radio programs, sings eight Victor Herbert melodies. It is quite remarkable that so young a girl can do so well but it would seem to us that Miss Butler might withhold her singing career for a few years and spend her time to better advantage in serious study and training.

The selections that Miss Butler has chosen for this album are: *Kiss in the Dark; Thine Alone; Summer Serenade; Sweethearts; Kiss Me Again; When You're Away; Romany Life; and Italian Street Song.*

Gade: Jalousie. One side, and **Brown: Temptation** (from "Going Hollywood"). Risë Stevens (mezzo-soprano) with orchestra conducted by Dudley King. 1-10" disc (C-4528M). \$1.

Miss Stevens presents these popular numbers in her best night club style. Torrid as they are, they leave us cold; but then we have never gone in for torch singers—guess we are too old for that sort of thing. Café society will probably think this is a great disc.

Friml: The Donkey Serenade (from "The Firefly"). One side, and **Herbert: Gypsy Love Song** (from "The Fortune Teller"). James Melton (tenor) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frank Black. 1-10" disc (V-10-1424). \$1.

James Melton turns in two spirited renditions of these popular favorites. His fans will like them and this disc should enjoy quite a large sale.

PIANO



Ives: Sonata No. 2 (Concord, Mass., 1840-1860). Nine sides, and **Ives: In the Inn** (from Sonata No. 1). John Kirkpatrick (piano). 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-749. \$7.25.

Columbia rates the thanks of all music lovers who are interested in American music in the modern idiom for the very excellent recording that has recently been made available of an important work by Charles Edward Ives (1874-). Mr. Ives was born in Danbury, Conn. He is a graduate of Yale, and while he is largely self-taught, he did study organ with Dudley Buck, and theory with Horatio Parker. For a number of years he engaged in the insurance business and music was but an avocation. Because of illness he retired from business in 1930 and is presently living in New York City. In 1947 he was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for music.

Mr. Ives is a pioneer in new musical forms and explored polytonality and other forms of dissonance be-

fore either Stravinsky or Schönberg attempted anything along that line. For many years Mr. Ives was considered a musical eccentric, and little attention was paid to his unusual music by serious musicians. Even today, his music is much more discussed than performed. Seldom does one have an opportunity of hearing any of it, and so the present recording is of particular importance.

The present work is usually known as the *Concord Sonata*. It was begun in 1909 and finished in 1915. It was first performed by John Kirkpatrick, the splendid artist who made this recording. At the time of its premiere, the late Lawrence Gilman said that it was "the greatest music composed by an American, and the most deeply and essentially American in impulse and implication." It is in four movements: the first entitled *Emerson*, the second *Hawthorne*, the third *The Alcotts* and the last *Thoreau*. Mr. Ives has written that the *Concord Sonata* is "an attempt to present one person's impression of the spirit of transcendentalism that is associated in the minds of many with Concord, Mass., of over a century ago."

It may very likely be that the vast majority of our readers will not find this work pleasing, but we believe that the discerning will feel that the opportunity to hear it as superbly played as it is on these discs is at least a great musical experience. R.

Albéniz: Iberia—Book I and Book II. Claudio Arrau (piano). 5-12" discs in album, Columbia Set MM-757. \$7.25.

Here is Claudio Arrau's outstanding contribution to the recorded repertoire. Practically speaking, this is a first recording, for only a couple of sections are available elsewhere. *Iberia* is a piano suite made up of twelve pieces divided into four Books, each containing three pieces. One half of the entire work is here recorded in Books I and II. Book I contains *Evocación*, *El Puerto*, *El Corpus en Sevilla*; Book II contains *Rondeña*, *Almería*, and *Triana*. *El Corpus en Sevilla* is also termed *Fête-Dieu à Seville* (Feast Day of Corpus Christi at Seville), and is known to many in Stokowski's transcription. *Triana* is the best known section of *Iberia*, and one of its most unforgettable pieces.

Iberia is regarded as Albéniz's most considerable contribution to modern music—rich in ideas of the most striking and picturesque character. This impressionistic music charmed Debussy who wrote eloquently of it. Albéniz's friend, Enrique Fernandez Arbos, orchestrated six numbers from *Iberia*, four of which he recorded with the Madrid Symphony (Col. MM-130). He contended that they needed orchestral resources to do justice to their rich coloring. We have always cherished this old set in our library because we like the music, but after hearing Arrau play them in their original form on the piano, we admit being tormented with the old argument that the composer knew what he was doing, and that Stokowski, Arbos,

and other such bad boys should not "orchestrate." Let the argument rest where it may. Arrau does a magnificent job with this music on the piano, and extracts all the color and feeling one could imagine. Subtle is the word for his playing.

This picturesque music of Spain is a rare experience which we hope many persons will now investigate, for this album is at the top of outstanding recordings released this year. It is splendidly recorded, the piano yielding an appropriately mellow tone. S.

Temptation. One side, and **Wilder: The Neurotic Goldfish**. (Both arr. Whittemore and Lowe). Arthur Whittemore and Jack Lowe (two pianos). 1-10" disc (V-10-1360). \$1.

Porter—arr. Whittemore and Lowe: **Night and Day**. One side, and **Wilder: Seldom the Sun**. Arthur Whittemore and Jack Lowe (two pianos). 1-10" disc (V-10-1361). \$1.

Waltz-Fantasy (On themes of Johann Strauss) (arr. Whittemore and Lowe). Arthur Whittemore and Jack Lowe (two pianos). 1-10" disc (V-10-1362). \$1.

Whittemore and Low have selected a few short selections that have been popular with their audiences and made recordings of them on these three discs. The music itself is of no particular importance, but the arrangements are smart, and the fans of these clever pianists will probably welcome the opportunity of adding these records to their collections. Reproduction—excellent.

Brahms: Rhapsody in G minor, Op. 79, No. 2. One side, and **Brahms: Ballade in G minor, Op. 118, No. 3**. Edwin Fischer (piano). 1-12" disc. (V-DB-6437). \$2.63.

As A. R. states in *The Gramophone* (London), "This is piano playing of aristocratic quality and in the great tradition." As the piano reproduction is superb, we have here an outstanding disc—one that anyone interested in piano recordings will wish at least to investigate. There have been several recordings made of the *Ballade in G minor*, but we do not recall another one of the *Rhapsody in G minor*.

The Music of Ernesto Lecuona. The First Piano Quartet. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set CO-41. \$4.75.

The music of Ernesto Lecuona, the Cuban composer and pianist, famous for his *Malaguena* and *La Comparsa*, seems to fit nicely into the style of The First Piano Quartet. These recordings that they have made of it are certainly interesting and pleasant to listen to. If you like Latin-American melodies, you will very likely be thrilled by these discs. The Lecuona selections in the present album, in addition to the two mentioned above, are: *Danza Negra*; *Danza Lucumi*; *Andalucia*; *Aragonesa*; and *Danza*

de los Nanigos.

RCA Victor has caught the wide tonal range of these four pianos with rare fidelity.

Liszt: Sonetto del Petrarca, No. 104. William Kapell (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0342). \$1.25.

The brilliant young pianist, William Kapell, provides the first domestic recording of this poetic and tuneful Liszt composition. The performance is superb and the reproduction is of the best.

VIOLIN



Encores. Ruggiero Ricci (violin) with piano accompaniments by Louis Persinger. 3-10" discs in album. Vox Set No. 196. \$3.94.

The brilliant young violinist, Ruggiero Ricci, whose recent recording of Bach's *Sonata for Unaccompanied Violin, No. 3 in A minor*, met with such enthusiastic approval by the record buying public, offers this month an album of some of his most successful encore numbers. All of them are unhackneyed and will be of interest to lovers of violin music. Ricci displays his marvelous technique and lovely tone to fine advantage in these recordings. They have been well-recorded and the record surfaces are satisfactorily smooth.

The selections in this album are: *Variations on a Theme of Corelli* (Tartini-Kreisler); *Staccato Study* (Wieniawski); *Zephyr* (Hubay); and *Menuetto and Gavotta* (Veracini); *Chorus of Dervishes* (Beethoven-Auer); *Etude in Sixths* (Chopin-Ricci); and *Caprice No. 1 "Le Vent"* (Vetsey).

MISCELLANEOUS



Folk Music of Haiti. Native artists and instruments recorded on location. 4-10" discs in album. Disc Set No. 142. \$6.04.

Music of the Cults of Cuba. Native artists and instruments recorded on location. 3-10" discs in album. Disc Set No. 131. \$4.73.

Two more albums in Disc's "Ethnic Series" of recordings—only of interest to students of the folklore of these countries. The recordings were made "on location" by native artists and are thus seemingly authentic. An excellent illustrated booklet describing the music and the instruments used are supplied with each album gratis.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$9.75.

The Concert Companion. By Robert Bagar and Louis Biancolli with an introduction by Deems Taylor. xi + 868 pp. Whittlesey House (New York). Price \$7.50.

The Art of Judging Music. By Virgil Thomson. x + 318 + xviii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$4.25.

The Record Book (International Edition). By David Hall. xii + 1394 pp. Oliver Durrell, Inc. (New York). Price \$7.50.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

A Dictionary of Musical Themes. Compiled by Harold Barlow and Sam Morgenstern with an introduction by John Erskine. xiii + 656 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

Records for Pleasure. By John Ball, Jr., ix + 214 pp. Rutgers University Press (New Brunswick, N. J.). Price \$2.50.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CE—Cetra, CL—Capitol, CDN—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CT—Concertone, D—Decca, DI—Disc, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, HU—Harvard Film Service, HW—Hargail, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, L—London Gramophone, MU—Muscraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, OK—Okeh, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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OUR readers may think that we have forgotten about the Columbia LP (Long Playing) Microgroove records, or that we did not think that they were of sufficient importance for further discussion. We announced them in our July issue and then said no more about them in our August issue. Nothing is farther from the truth. They are terrifically important, for it would seem that a new era in recording is about to begin with their introduction and development. In July we said that we thought the records themselves were entirely satisfactory, and further investigation has confirmed that opinion. They are not only satisfactory, but in many cases the fidelity of reproduction exceeds that of the usual shellac recording that was made simultaneously with the LP one (Columbia for some time has been making two recordings of each classical selection: one at 78 r.p.m. and another at $33\frac{1}{3}$ r.p.m.). Wear tests show that the LP discs will give just as many satisfactory playings as standard records, if—and this is tremendously important—they are properly handled and stored. LP records require more careful handling and should never be left where they may become scratched. They should be returned promptly to their envelopes, or perhaps better still, albums should be secured for them. They should be cleaned quite often, but a record brush will not do the job properly; they should be wiped with a *damp* soft cloth. A piece of flannel is excellent for this purpose. LP records will vary in fidelity of reproduction just as the regular shellac records will; but in testing most of the LP discs that Columbia has made available, we can state that they are of an exceptionally high standard of fidelity and unusually free of blemishes of any kind. It is more than likely that the record will come to the owner in perfect condition, and it is up to him to see that they

are kept that way by cautioning every person who uses them to exercise the greatest care.

Our readers will recall that in July we said that "we have not heard a commercial record player designed to be attached to present radios and radio-combinations that will play the LP records entirely satisfactorily." This statement, while true, was somewhat misleading. It inferred that the Columbia record player, which is made by Philco, and is the same as the one that Philco is distributing under its own name, was at fault. Further investigation showed that this was not the case. It was not until long after our July article was written that we had an opportunity to make exhaustive tests. In these tests we learned many things. In the first place, the player must be connected to a reproducing instrument of high quality, such as a Magnavox or Stromberg-Carlson or other instrument in their class. The pick-up must be carefully handled because the stylus is hardly thicker than a human hair and will not stand the abuse that is often given the standard pick-up. We might mention that the stylus in the Columbia player may be easily replaced by the average layman. The cost of a new stylus is nominal.

Another important thing that we learned was that, because LP records usually have both more highs and more lows than standard records, great care must be taken to adjust the tone controls to suit each recording in order to attain proper balance. In most cases, if the treble control is turned to maximum there will be a shrillness that is unnatural and decidedly unpleasant to the discerning listener.

To sum up briefly, we might say that the LP records and the instruments designed to play them are both manufactured with great precision and require precision handling. In our

opinion, the results that will be attained are well worth the little effort one must exert to secure them.

We frankly admit that after the experience we had with the long playing records that were issued by another manufacturer in 1931, we approached this whole subject with an attitude of extreme skepticism. We wanted to be absolutely sure that the present LP records were entirely practical and that commercial instruments to play them properly were available. We can now state that such is the case and we do not hesitate to urge our readers to investigate this new advancement in the recording art—an advancement that may well be one of the most important in the long history of this art.

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BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues published during the last sixteen years are available. The price is 5c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 125 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

ORCHESTRA



Vivaldi: Le Quattro Stagioni. Orchestra of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia, conducted by Bernardino Molinari. 6-12" discs in album. Cetra Set 107. \$12.04.

We usually think of program music and tone-poems along with Liszt, Richard Strauss, and our later composers; but did you know that old Antonio Vivaldi, back in the early 1700's, wrote program concertos? And there was no "general idea" about it; he related the music to sonnets which accompanied the score. These sonnets are entitled Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter, and each sonnet is divided into lettered parts; the lettered parts are repeated in the musical score at the beginning of those passages of the descriptive music to which they apply. This seems to be the first instance of the use of this device in the history of the tone-poem. The program notes which accompany this album have a breakdown of the first section, Spring, showing the lines of the sonnet and where it appears in the music. It is certainly interesting!

As for the music itself, *The Four Seasons* is highly entertaining music, delightful and easy to listen to. It is four concerti grossi (from a set of twelve) for strings and continuo published in a modern edition, prepared by Bernardino Molinari in 1927.

He scored it for strings, cembalo and organ. For those who think that all concerti grossi sound pretty much alike, this set will come as a surprise. Throughout the course of the four concerti, or movements, we hear birds, fountains, zephyrs, thunder and lightning, shepherds, more bird songs, another shepherd disturbed in his repose by swarms of flies, a festival of Bacchus, hunting scene, the shivering cold, slipping on ice, and chattering teeth. Oh, what pikers our contemporary composers are!

Molinari directs a superb performance of this music, using a fine sounding group of strings. The reproduction has been accomplished with good resonance; it is slightly uneven in character, occasionally, but is generally excellent. The surfaces set a new high for domestic shellac; they look beautiful and sound quiet. S.

Vaughan Williams: Fantasia on a Theme by Tallis. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-300. \$3.50.

The strange quality in this music which perplexes but pleases its moderately large following stems from the fact that Tallis' theme is in the Third Mode. In 1567 Tallis wrote a set of eight melodies for the Metrical Psalter of Matthew Parker, then Archbishop of Canterbury, each illustrating one of the eight ecclesiastical modes. A mode, in medieval music, was comparable to a scale as we know it today. It was on the third of Tallis' melodies that Vaughan Williams based his *Fantasia*, written in 1910 for the Gloucester Festival.

The *Fantasia* is scored for double string orchestra with four solo strings, and is in variation form, although in one continuous movement. The texture of the music, aside from its modal quality, is very full and rich, massive chords moving onward through subtle progressions and what seem like sly harmonic schemes. The total effect is mystical in a rather strange and intangible way.

Mitropoulos provides a most sensitive reading. It is superior to several previous recordings, and as good as any performance we have ever heard. His dynamics are highly contrasting; the music can stand strong contrasts, being scored only for strings. It is evident that he feels this music deeply and does it with sincerity. Unlike some of Columbia's Minneapolis recordings, the reproduction of this set is good. We heard it on several different machines, and on each the string tone was pleasing, resonant in the bass and clear in the treble (though not plucky). Surfaces on our set were quiet. S.

Debussy: Iberia (Images No. 2). Five sides, and **Debussy: Berceuse Héroïque.** Paris Conservatory Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-51. \$7.35.

Debussy composed three sets of Images: Set No.

I for piano in 1905 contained three pieces, Set No. II for piano in 1907 contained three pieces, and Set No. III for orchestra in 1909 contained also three pieces. The second of the third set is *Iberia*, divided in three contrasting sections: "In the Streets and By-Ways," "Perfumes of the Night," and "Morning of a Festival Day." Debussy took the essence of Spanish folk music and the Andalusian dance and dressed it up in unique and colorful orchestral garb. Debussy's Spanish music is actually good Spanish music, although it is bathed in a spotlight of French impressionistic orchestration.

With the above thought in mind we would say that two somewhat different readings of this music are each acceptable. These readings are the present set by Münch, and the Reiner-Pittsburgh set issued in 1942 (Col. MM-491). Münch applies the feathery touch and obtains some nebulous effects contrasted with flashy fortissimos and produces quite a striking and extravagant *Iberia*. Decca, recording in Kingsway Hall obtains good results parallel to Münch's performance. Reiner exploits the Spanish tang more fully with the emphasis on *Iberia* rather than on Debussy. We would consider Reiner's reading more valid, although Münch's has more superficial appeal. The reproduction of the Reiner set is still highly acceptable, and his last side filler is the *Rakoczy March* which (in his thrilling performance) we prefer to the insipid *Berceuse Héroïque* in the newer set. The *Berceuse* was written in 1914 for piano, and also, for orchestra, according to Grove's; this is probably its first recording. S.

Stravinsky: Danses Concertantes. RCA Victor Chamber Orchestra conducted by Igor Stravinsky. Five sides, and **Stravinsky: Scherzo à la Russe.** RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by Igor Stravinsky. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1234. \$4.75.

From the notes which accompany the album we learn some pertinent facts. *Danses Concertantes* was commissioned by Werner Janssen and first performed by the Janssen Symphony under Stravinsky's direction in 1942. The following year it found its way to the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and was produced by them in New York, and it has been performed by them many times since. The usual procedure was here reversed: instead of a ballet score becoming famous in the concert hall this concert work (conceived as a "ballet for orchestra") was later turned into a masterful dance work. It is scored for twenty-four players.

We can't help feeling that Stravinsky figured this work would make a good ballet for ballets as well as a good ballet for orchestras. Scoring a work for only twenty-four players, a work which was commissioned by a symphony orchestra conductor, seems strange. But the idea of a ballet for orchestra is clever, and would suggest a smaller group of instruments. Stravinsky invites his orchestral dancers to

create an ironical dance commentary on a tradition that has preserved many formulas along with genuine spontaneity. They do indeed poke fun at the ballet and the score turns out to be a satirical piece. It requires concentration on the part of the listener, for it is not obvious music. We found it more pleasant than some of Stravinsky's compressed and angular works of later years.

The reproduction is open and revealing and points up the staccato touch which characterizes the music. The skillful performers, guided by Stravinsky, offer a polished performance. S.

Gershwin: An American in Paris. RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leonard Bernstein. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1237. \$3.50.

The previous Victor recording of this work is listed in the current Victor catalog as being performed by "George Gershwin, pianist, with the RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by Nathaniel Shilkret" (35963/4). This same work is listed in a book about records as "George Gershwin conducting a symphony orchestra," and in another book as "Victor Symphony—Nat. Shilkret (recorded under Gershwin's supervision)." It's obvious that Gershwin had a hand in it somewhere, but nobody seems quite sure about it. In any event, RCA Victor badly needed a new version in its catalog, for the old one was no credit to Gershwin, the music, or the art of recording. Bernstein does well with the kaleidoscopic bits of musical portraiture of Paris that make up this score. To us the music is as much a period piece as something from the eighteenth century, for it is life as a young man saw it in the dizzy twenties of prohibition, prosperity, flappers, and the like. Its brevity, sketchiness, and lack of inner meaning, together with the clever portrayal of a man visiting Paris, make it almost a documentary of those times.

The orchestra, as directed by Bernstein, plays *An American in Paris* with the proper spirit, the finished work being a very fair estimate of the work (not an easy one to put over). Rodzinski and the New York Philharmonic (Col. MX-246) have had this piece pretty much to themselves for several years, but they now meet a good challenge. Rodzinski has a somewhat more academic slant on the score, but his is not a stilted reading. Bernstein is a little more racy, Rodzinski's more polished. The reproduction of the two is about equal, both being very good. S.

Corelli: Concerto Grosso in D major, Op. 6, No. 1. E. I. A. R. Symphony Orchestra conducted by Carlo Zecchi. 2-12" discs (CE-BB-25125 and CE-BB-25126) (manual sequence). \$5.25.

As far as we are concerned there is not nearly enough of such music recorded and so we welcome this pair of discs with open arms. Corelli (1653-

1713) wrote prolifically, but little of his vast output has reached the recording studios; the present domestic catalogs contain very little. He has received greater attention abroad, and if it were not for imported recordings such as the present Italian one, most of us would be quite ignorant of many of his fine compositions. Corelli wrote music to be enjoyed, and we feel that present-day music lovers would enjoy it equally as well as the folks for whom it was conceived if they had the opportunity of hearing it.

If you are not familiar with Corelli's *Concerti Grossi*, of which he wrote many, here is an excellent opportunity to become acquainted with one of them.

Lecocq—arr. Jacob: *La Fille de Madame Angot*—Ballet Suite. Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, conducted by Hugo Rignold. 2-12" discs (V-C-3707 and V-C-3708) (manual sequence). \$3.99.

This pleasing suite was arranged from melodies taken from Lecocq's most popular operetta *La Fille de Madame Angot*, which ran continuously in Paris for over a year, starting on 21 February 1873. It was one of the most sensational hits of its time.

Alexandre Charles Lecocq (1832-1938) was a most prolific composer of operettas and comic operas in the style of Offenbach—some critics think that, on the whole, he was superior to that master of light opera. Little of Lecocq's music is known on this side of the Atlantic and so the present recording is most welcome. It is not music of importance but it is tuneful and delightful to listen to, especially on a balmy summer evening.

Soft Lights and Sweet Music. Morton Gould and his Orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-765. \$4.90.

The title of this little album pretty well describes its contents. Morton Gould has made his own arrangements of some sentimental numbers that have been popular during the last score of years and presents them in his inimitable manner for our enjoyment.

The selections he has chosen are: *Soft Lights and Sweet Music*; *Let's Put Out the Lights and Go to Sleep*; *You and the Night and the Music*; *Good Night, Sweetheart*; *Tell Me that You Love Me Tonight*; *My Silent Love*; *Orchids in the Moonlight*; and *I'm in the Mood for Love*.

Prokofiev—arr. Kurtz: *March, Op. 99*. One side, and **Shostakovich**: *The Golden Mountain*—Waltz. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Efrem Kurtz. 1-12" disc (C-12881D). \$1.25.

These two tunes are ones that may very likely be popular in Russia today. They are catchy and ones

that anyone may feel the urge to whistle. Not music of importance but music that may make quite a hit on this side of the "Iron Curtain." Music knows no political borders despite what our Communist friends may say. Kurtz knows how to handle such selections and he makes them sound very attractive on this well-recorded disc.

Suppé: Overtures. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel, Victor Olof, and Sir Malcolm Sargent. 3-12" discs in album. London Set LA-24. \$7.35.

The feature of this album is the "full range recording" that has been achieved by the English recorders. As examples of fine reproduction these discs are outstanding. We don't know how many American collectors will be interested in the Suppé overtures but those who will find that these recordings are tops.

The three selections in this album are: *Light Cavalry*; *Poet and Peasant*; and *Morning, Noon and Night in Vienna*.

Brahms: Akademische Festouvertüre, Op. 80. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 1-12" disc (V-12-0377). \$1.25.

The catalogs contain several recordings of Brahms' popular *Academic Festival Overture* and most collectors have at least one version in their libraries. However, Koussevitzky presents a superb performance on the present disc, and while it may not be needed in the recorded repertory, it is certainly a fine item, and as such we recommend it highly.

Coates: Knightsbridge March. One side, and **Coates: London Bridge March.** London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eric Coates. 1-12" disc (C-72597D). \$1.25.

Two melodious marches by the popular British composer of light classical music, whose tuneful selections have met with much favor here in America. The *Knightsbridge March* is from his "London Suite"; *London Bridge March* is an independent number. The composer conducts them with fine spirit on this disc and the reproduction has been splendidly achieved.

CONCERTO



Poulenc: Concerto in D minor for Two Pianos. Whittemore and Lowe (pianos) with the RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1235. \$4.75.

The Poulenc *Concerto in D* is music with appeal, and should find a large audience now that it is available on records. We first recall hearing it about fifteen years ago, but performances since then have

been infrequent. We have the feeling that it is not great music, but at the same time it has a curious appeal. It seems derivative, particularly the second movement which is reminiscent of Beethoven and Rachmaninoff. Yet this movement has melodic qualities which will be readily accessible to anyone on the first hearing. The other movements are crisp and bright, written with assurance. The finale never lets down for a moment, continually moving along with genuine brilliance. There is a great deal of economy in the scoring. The piano writing itself is not overloaded, and the orchestral score is actually sparse. It is scored for woodwinds and brass in pairs, only half the usual number of strings (eight each of first and second violins, and four each of violas, 'cellos, and basses), and percussion.

Whitmore and Lowe find this work congenial material and do a splendid job with it. Their performance is enthusiastic and entirely convincing. Mitropoulos companions them perfectly; he obviously feels the music, too, and is not just tagging along. The rapport between all three is quite remarkable. The reproduction is only fair by today's standards; this work was probably recorded in a broadcasting studio or other such acoustically dull place. S.

Vieuxtemps: Concerto No. 5 in A minor, Op. 37. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1240. \$3.50.

Vieuxtemps was another of those legendary performers, who, like Liszt, Paganini, Spohr, and Wieniawski, was a superlative performer and a composer as well. None of them achieved true greatness as a composer as we see the picture today, although they had remarkable success in both fields during their lifetime. Their concertos, written for their own performing instruments, were virtuoso pieces designed primarily to display their own skill and charm concert audiences with dazzling technical displays.

Heifetz takes the Vieuxtemps *Concerto No. 5* and makes as decent music as possible with it. It is strictly violin music for display purposes, but Vieuxtemps had, fortunately, some musical ideas that incorporated pleasing romantic melodies and fair emotional content. His composing had somewhat more substance than Paganini, and this is evident in the present work. However, it is still not music to be ranked with the rock-ribbed concertos of the masters; it is music to be enjoyed as a diversion. Heifetz performs with his familiar polish, the difficulties of the work being so completely absorbed that the listener is not aware of them. It is great fiddling, and a most thoughtful exposition of the score. Sargent and his Britishers manage to keep up with him most of the time.

Released in England in January of this year, *The Gramophone* (London) concluded its review with a

fine summary sentence: "Not much in this pathos and melodrama, this marvelous popping about, is likely to stay with a body for permanent sustenance or solace; but accept it on its own meagre mental ground, and you can have a quarter-hour of thorough enjoyment, in this sparkling show of superlative fiddlestickery." This is the first domestic release of this work. Reproduction is fine. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Ravel: Trio in A minor. Trio di Trieste. 3-12" discs in album (V-C-7685 to V-C-7687) (automatic sequence). \$5.99.

This important Ravel composition has been missing from the domestic catalogs for many years and so this entirely satisfactory rendition is doubly welcome. If the work is not known to you, you have a rare treat in store when you listen to the present recording.

Roland Manuel, one of Ravel's earliest admirers, has called attention to certain analogies which he finds between Ravel's *Trio* and Saint-Saëns' *Trio in F major, Op. 18*. It is true that it is like the Saint-Saëns in that the same clarity, order, elegance and crispness prevail, but it is wholly dissimilar in at least one respect; it is effective and interesting throughout, while the Saint-Saëns is not without its moments of dullness. The Ravel *Trio* is in the usual four movements. The supple, smoothly flowing first movement, with its striking rhythmical effects and suave, insinuating melodies, is a beautiful piece of music—perhaps, indeed, the finest in the work. The next movement, a sort of scherzo, is entitled "Pantomime," an Eastern dance. The "Passacaille," which follows, begins and ends with bass notes struck by the piano, suggesting a funeral march. Much of this movement is written in the vicinity of middle C or below it, so that a curiously sombre effect is obtained, forming a vivid contrast to the other movements. The impetuous Finale is light and graceful but full of gusto. The writing for the strings and piano is full of felicitous touches and reveals once again Ravel's technical mastery.

Music such as this requires careful handling. It should not be heard too often, for excessive repetition would probably make it cloy. Its delicacy and finesse, so charming at the first few hearings, might possibly turn pale and sickly. R.

Bax: Elegiac Trio. Martin Ruderman (flute), Milton Thomas (viola), and Lois Craft (harp). Three sides, and **Debussy: Syrinx.** Martin Ruderman (flute) unaccompanied. 2-12" discs in album. Alco Set AC-205. \$3.78.

Alco has added two interesting items to the repertory of recorded music in issuing this unusual album. Both are well worth the attention of serious

music lovers. Bax's *Elegiac Trio* dates from 1916 and is written in his usual pensive and somewhat mystical mood. Repeated playings will bring out much beauty that is not at first apparent. For those who would know more of this distinguished English contemporary composer, an investigation of the present work is indicated.

The fourth side of this pair of discs contains a Debussy work that is seldom heard, although it holds much charm in its simple and uneffected way. It is the composer's interpretation of the death of Pan, and was written as incidental music for Gabriel Mourey's play, "Psyche."

The artists who have made these recordings are thoroughly adequate and their performances call for high praise. The reproduction is satisfactory.

Busch: Spirituals Transcribed for Chamber Orchestra, Op. 58D. Busch Chamber Players conducted by Adolf Busch. 3-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-764. \$3.90.

It is reported that Adolf Busch, while on a concert tour, heard a fellow musician sing a number of spirituals for want of something better to do on the long train ride. He was fascinated by the Negro melodies and then and there made up his mind to use them as a basis for a chamber music work. His Opus 58D was the result. It consists of seven sections—each section is an orchestral transcription of a Negro spiritual.

This work is well worth investigation. It is in no sense just instrumental arrangements of the original melodies. Mr. Busch has taken the melodies as a basis on which to start and has developed from each of them a fine little chamber music work—quite profound, yet pleasing and easy to listen to. These little gems have been beautifully performed by Mr. Busch's players and have been most faithfully recorded by Columbia.

Handel: Sonata in C minor. Robert Bloom (oboe) accompanied by Earl Wild (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0380). \$1.25.

Robert Bloom was a member of the Philadelphia Orchestra and left to join the NBC Symphony when that unique organization was founded. He is conceded to be one of the world's leading oboists, and the present disc should further his celebrity with music lovers everywhere. This lovely Handel sonata, in four short movements, is delightful to listen to, and as performed by Mr. Bloom it becomes a real musical gem.

Handel: Oboe Sonata No. 1 in C minor. Ralph Gomberg (oboe) accompanied by Yella Pessl (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (W-502). \$1.57.

For those who are interested in unusual chamber music recordings, this splendid rendition of a Handel sonata for oboe and figured bass is an item

worthy of investigation. The artists who have recorded it are thoroughly qualified for the task and the reproduction is entirely satisfactory.

CHORAL



Stravinsky: Symphonie des Psaumes. (Sung in Latin). London Philharmonic Choir and London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-52. \$7.35.

Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms* (1930) is a work on which the camps remain divided. Those who should know, and those of good taste, generally feel it is a work of towering importance and eloquence. Most of the musical public is hardly qualified to judge it for it is rarely performed and requires more than an occasional hearing for anyone to appreciate it. Its only previous recording, made in 1931, was conducted by Stravinsky (Col. MM-162), and remains a thoroughly excellent job which many have cherished.

The text for this profound work is taken from Psalms Nos. 39, 40 and 150. The choral parts are so closely woven with the orchestral parts that the effect is refreshing to most of us familiar with the usual oratorio style. Actually it bears no relation to oratorio, for Stravinsky was not trying to adapt oratorio to his purpose, nor change oratorio in any way. He merely wrote a composition based on Psalms for chorus and orchestra, and poured a great deal of profound thought into it. The logic of the work reveals itself more with each hearing. We still feel that certain phrases are a bit acid in their deliberate dissonance, but the music leads on with cumulative power—power of expression but not necessarily volume, for the work closes with a lofty tranquility. It is a work which is unique in many ways.

Ernest Ansermet is well known as one of Stravinsky's greatest interpreters. Many who heard him with the NBC Orchestra last season were greatly impressed with his sterling work. The *Symphony of Psalms* benefits from his direction, the reproduction is typically fine, making this album a definitive modern version of a work which seems destined to be known principally by its recordings. S.

Debussy: La Damselle Élue. Bidú Sayão (soprano), Rosalind Nadell (contralto), with the Women's Chorus of the University of Pennsylvania directed by Robert Elmore and the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. Five sides, and **Debussy: De Fleurs.** Bidú Sayão (soprano) accompanied by Milne Charnley (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-761. \$4.75.

In order that we may come to this early Debussy work with an authoritative appreciation of it, we

will quote at some length from *Claude Debussy* by Léon Vallas:

"*La Damselle Éluë*, in spite of its very languishing melodies and all the finery in the fashion of 1887 with which it is bedecked, shows still more clearly the percursory signs of what was later on to be called 'Debussyism.' It exhales a curious delightfully fragrant perfume which harmonizes subtly with Dante Gabriel Rossetti's exquisite, but rather effeminate text. The succession of fifths in the very first bars proclaims the young composer's audacious personality. Its mysticism seems to prepare the way for *Le Martyre de Saint Sébastien*. The spirit of Wagner—the Wagner of *Parsifal*—hovers over the entire work; there is a faint suggestion of César Franck's *Rébecca*, and Massenet's caressing charm greets one at many a turn. One notices Debussy's constant care to subordinate the symphony to the poem, to interpret the latter on a flowing style closely resembling the words and, by means of syllabic diction and a choral treatment free from contrapuntal interlacing, to bring out all the words clearly, even those that occur in the united choral parts. There are some attractive and novel effects in the treatment of the female voices, and the instrumentation is light and delicate, though varied throughout."

A French recording of this work, which was made prior to 1935, remains in the RCA Victor catalog and has enjoyed some popularity through the years. This very fine present one is much to be preferred and should stir up new interest in this unusual work.

Jewish Holidays in Song. Shirley Russell (soprano), Rosalind Nadell (contralto), Emanuel Rosenberg (tenor), Jacob Marcus (tenor), Emile Renan (baritone), and the Free Synagogue Choir conducted by A. W. Binder, with Alexander Richardson (organ). 3-12" discs in album, RCA Victor Set MO-1239. \$4.75.

The excellent notes that accompany this album are introduced by the following paragraph:

"One of the oldest and most immutable of musical cultures is that of the Jewish people. As early as the fifteenth century B.C. there were laid the foundations of the elaborate traditions of Jewish ritual and ceremony, and by the time of Solomon, five centuries later, the musical ceremonies had assumed their rightfully important place in the lives of the people. It is this changeless music that has come down to us of the present, channeled specifically through the medium of the synagogue. In the present album, Professor Binder has selected music from the various holidays of the Jewish year, music which complements the previously released album, *Prayers and Songs for the Sabbath* (Vic. MO-1192)."

Music for the following holidays are included in the present album: Yom Kippur; Simhat Torah; Hanukkah; Purim; Pesach; and Shebuoth.

OPERA

Britten: The Rape of Lucretia (Excerpts). Peter Pears (tenor), Joan Cross (soprano), Norman Lumsden (bass), Dennis Dowling (baritone), Frederick Sharp (baritone), Nancy Evans (contralto), Flora Neilsen (mezzo-soprano), Margaret Ritchie (soprano), with Chamber Orchestra conducted by Reginald Goodall. 8-12" discs in albums (V-C-7706 to V-C-7713) (automatic sequence). \$15.96.

Ever since this recording was released in England during last March, many of us have been anxiously awaiting its arrival in this country. It is here, and it is even more important than some of us thought it would be. While the recording is not complete, it covers the ground exceedingly well, and with the aid of the very excellent booklet that accompanies these records one may follow the familiar story with ease.

The Rape of Lucretia is a chamber opera written for solo voices with a small orchestra, which should be composed of solo players. The action of the tragedy is framed by a male and female chorus who stand on either side of the stage and from time to time explain and comment upon what is taking place without ever becoming a part of the plot. We are very fortunate in having Peter Pears and Joan Cross, who appeared in the original production, for these important roles in the present recorded version. The other parts are in able hands and the splendid orchestra under the direction of Reginald Goodall adds greatly to the effectiveness of the performance. This recording was made under the personal supervision of the composer and issued under the auspices of the British Council.

Naturally as one listens to *The Rape of Lucretia*, he cannot help thinking of Britten's *Peter Grimes*, which was so successfully produced by the Metropolitan in New York and afterwards met with considerable acclaim when that famous organization included it in its repertoire for its transcontinental tour last spring. It would seem to us that there is much more for the average music lover to enjoy in *The Rape of Lucretia* than in *Peter Grimes*—much more of pure lyric beauty and certainly more in orchestral interludes of rare effectiveness. For example we might mention the interlude that describes Tarquinius' ride to Rome in Act I, Scene 2, and the musical description of the rape in Act II, Scene 1. Both are works of great tragic beauty and cannot help thrilling those who are in the mood for music of this character. For sheer lyric beauty we call especial attention to the duet sung by Lucretia and her nurse Bianca at the opening of the second scene of Act II; we do not recall a more lovely selection in any opera written in the last decade or two.



All in all, we rather believe that most discerning American opera lovers will find this recording sufficiently rewarding to wish to add it to their collections. At least it is worthy of serious investigation. As usual, the British recorders have used sufficient care to see that a well-balanced reproduction has been attained—nothing but praise on that score.

R.

Mascagni: L'Amico Fritz. (Complete Opera). (Sung in Italian). Pia Tassinari, Ferruccio Tagliavini, Amalia Pini, Saturno Meletti, Armando Gianotti, Pier Latinucci, Giulia Bersona, Chorus and Orchestra of E. I. A. R. conducted by Pietro Mascagni. 13-12" discs in album (automatic sequence). Cetra Set 106. \$25.92.

Verdi: La Forza del Destino. (Complete Opera). (Sung in Italian). Maria Caniglia, Ebe Stignani, Tancredi Pasero, Ernesto Dominici, Galliano Masini, Carlo Tagliabue, Saturno Meletti, Liana Avogadro, Dario Caselli, Giuseppe Nessi, Chorus and Orchestra of E. I. A. R. conducted by Gino Marinuzzi. 18-12" discs in albums (automatic sequence). Cetra Set 102. \$35.08.

These sets were reviewed previously in THE NEW RECORDS when the manual sequence copies were received. So many persons were disappointed at that time because they did not come in automatic sequence that we are happy to be able to announce that copies are now available as described in the heading above.

Jennie Tourel Sings Offenbach. (Sung in French). Jennie Tourel (mezzo-soprano) with orchestra conducted by Maurice Abravanel. 2-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-299. \$2.90.

The most admirable trait of any artist is versatility. To be able to perform several or many types of music authentically and artistically is a great accomplishment and makes a program by that artist a great experience. As in a concert program, so it goes in an artist's recorded repertoire. Unfortunately Miss Tourel does not visit the recording studios often enough, although her previous albums have been excellent; the *Brazilian Serenades* by Villa-Lobos, Songs of Rachmaninoff, and Rossini Arias. And for something quite different again, she now appears in some arias of Offenbach.

There are four excerpts from *La Périochole*, an operetta first produced in Paris in 1868. One of the three principal characters is La Périochole, four of whose arias Miss Tourel sings with an inherent operetta style which is a result of previous operetta experience. The music is full of melodic charm and exactly what one would expect it to be; Miss Tourel makes the most of every phrase, inserting all the cute touches associated with such music and singing throughout with a lovely tonal quality. To list the four arias here would mean little; however, the program notes accompanying the album have been

well written by Morris Hastings, and anyone can easily gather the situations in the opera surrounding the music for complete enjoyment of these fragments.

The final side is devoted to the *Barcarolle* from "The Tales of Hoffman" (Act II, Scene 1), in which Miss Tourel sings both parts, the soprano and the alto. She does an extremely creditable job, and provides the best domestic version of this imperishable gem, singing it with feeling and great purity of tone. The orchestral accompaniments are well wrought by Maurice Abravanel, and the set is well reproduced with quiet surfaces—altogether a most attractive little album. S.



VOCAL

John McCormack Sings Again. John McCormack (tenor) with piano or orchestra accompaniments. 6-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-1228. \$7.

If space permitted, a whole book might be written about the records contained in this unique album. To the present generation of young music lovers, John McCormack is only known through the comparatively few records that remain in the present RCA Victor catalog. Even many of us of an early generation think of him as the Irish tenor, who under the auspices of the Knights of Columbus or some other organization, gave concerts in armories or convention halls where four or five thousand devoted fans clamored for his renditions of *Mother Machree*; *Macushla*; *I Hear You Calling Me* or other sentimental ballads of that kind. We are all too likely to forget that he was an artist of great ability, and that in certain Italian operas and in English oratorios, especially those of Handel, he was, in his early years, supreme. Unfortunately his American manager quickly showed him the way to huge financial returns through the sort of concerts we mentioned above, and Mr. McCormack left the opera and oratorio stage. His popularity became so great that in many cities there was not a theatre or concert hall nearly large enough for his audiences and thus the concerts were transferred to any large auditorium that was available, no matter how barn-like it might be—armories with chairs packed in as close as possible with hundreds seated on the temporary platform, and some agile listeners sitting on the rafters was not an uncommon occurrence.

The present album contains several songs that might have been heard at such concerts but it also contains many very fine selections—musical gems that show the art of a truly great singer. Deserving of especial mention are the duets with Lucrezia Bori and Mario Sammarco.

The selections chosen for this album are: *Come, My Beloved* from Handel's "Atalanta"; Mozart's

Ridente la Calma; Antonio Lotti's *Pur dicesti, o bocca bella*; *Feldeinsamkeit*, Op. 86, No. 2 by Brahms; *Macusbla* by Dermot MacMurrough; Charles Marshall's *I Hear You Calling Me*; "Maritana": *There Is A Flower*, by Wallace; and *Good-bye, Sweetheart, Goodbye* by John L. Matton. Also the arias *Vieni al contento profondo* from Act III of "Lakme"; *Dai Campi, Dai Prati* from Act I of Boito's "Mefistofele"; and the duets *O Soave Fanciulla* from Act I of "La Boheme" recorded with soprano Lucrezia Bori; and *Del Tempio al Limiar* from Act I of "I Pescatori di Perle," by Bizet, featuring the distinguished baritone Mario Sammarco.

R.

Wagner: Five Songs. ("Wesendonck Gedichte".) Eileen Farrell (soprano) with Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1233. \$4.75

This is the first complete domestic recording of this song cycle consisting of Wagner's musical settings of five poems by Mathilde Wesendonck, the beautiful young matron whose name has been closely associated with that of the great composer. Some say that she was the inspiration for *Tristan und Isolde*.

RCA Victor announces that Stokowski selected the young soprano, Eileen Farrell, to record these songs, and from the results we would say that it was a very happy choice. Miss Farrell has a voice of wide range, and in the lower register, a dark rich quality that is perfectly suited to the music that Wagner has provided. The present recordings are the first that Miss Farrell has made for RCA Victor, and we are sure that after you have heard these discs you will be looking forward to this fine artist's future releases. Stokowski has an affinity for such music and the orchestral support which he has supplied for the soloist is a prime feature of these recordings—some will feel that it is of equal importance to the vocal line.

The four songs that make up this cycle, together with *Träume*, which is very well-known and which has been previously recorded several times, are: *Der Engel*; *Stehe still*; *Im Treibhaus*; and *Schmerzen*.

Erna Sack Sings Strauss and Lehar. Erna Sack (soprano) with chorus and orchestra of the German Opera House, Berlin. 3-12" discs in album. Mercury Set DM-18. \$5.23.

In announcing this album, Mercury supplies the following interesting notes on Erna Sack:

"During the middle 1930's reports out of Europe told of a phenomenal coloratura soprano of the Dresden Opera whose vocal range surpassed that of such legendary prima donnas as Tetrizzini, Melba and Jenny Lind. Recordings and broadcasts from the continent gave startling confirmation to these reports, and in a matter of months the name of Erna Sack achieved international renown on both sides

of the Atlantic. In the fall of 1937 . . . she appeared over the NBC-Blue Network.

" . . . Her first chance in a leading role was in *Don Pasquale*. It was at this time that Erna Sack, still a virtual unknown, suddenly discovered her possession of an extraordinary vocal range . . . While working on a taxing passage, the young artist found she could reach G above high C with little or no effort. Again and again she repeated this unusual feat, and before the day was out, she had attained the unheard of C above high C."

During recent years, various Erna Sack records have appeared on the American market; most of them were probably dubbed from copies of her European records that were brought to this country. The discs in the present Mercury set were stamped from masters that were recently imported from Czechoslovakia and superior to all Erna Sack records except the original ones that were imported from Germany before World War II.

The present album contains the following selections by Johann Strauss, Jr.: *Voices of Spring*; *My Dear Marquis and I'll Play the Innocent Country Maid*, both from "Die Fledermaus"; *On the Beautiful Blue Danube*; and the *Gold and Silver Waltz* and *No One Loves You As I Do* from "Paganini," both by Franz Lehar.

Cadman—arr. Burger: **At Dawning**, Op. 29, No. 1. One side, and **Geeh!**—arr. Burger: **For You Alone**. Charles Kullman (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Julius Burger. 1-10" disc (C-4529M). \$1.

The American tenor, Charles Kullman, who has distinguished himself at the Metropolitan, sings these well-beloved ballads very nicely. Not an exciting record but pleasant enough in its modest way.

Piedigrotta No. 1. Antonio Basurto (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Giuseppe Anépeta. 3-10" discs in album. Cetra Set 108. \$4.73.

Piedigrotta is the famous Neapolitan Festival celebrated annually in September at the Grotta di Pozzuoli near Naples. It was originally a religious pilgrimage on the day of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, dating back to the 13th century. Through the ages it has developed into a lively, colorful, typically Neapolitan folk festival, for which songs are especially composed. Such famous songs as *Santa Lucia*, *Fenesta che lucive* and *Funiculi-funicula* were first heard at these festivals.

The present album contains six songs that won top honors at the Piedigrotta 1947 Festival, beautifully sung by Antonio Basurto with appropriate orchestral accompaniments. These recordings were made in Italy and the records pressed in this country from imported masters. You will find the reproduction and the record surfaces entirely satisfactory.

Here is an album that contains much attractive

music for those who are interested in the type of ballads that are currently popular in Italy. Spaghetti, itself, is not more in the tradition. A leaflet, describing each song, is supplied with these discs.

Poulenc: Les Chemins d'Amour. (Sung in French).

One side, and **Roy: How Do I Love Thee.** Gladys Swarthout (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by Gibner King (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1422). \$1.

Last spring mezzo-soprano Gladys Swarthout introduced a song during one of her Telephone Hour appearances over NBC. Her performance of the song elicited more fan mail than she had ever received for any single selection she had ever sung on the air, and soon afterward she recorded it for RCA Victor. The song is *Les Chemins d'Amour* by the contemporary French composer Francis Poulenc.

Les Chemins d'Amour is a Parisian music hall waltz filled with the nostalgia and sentimental gaiety of the French capital. Coupled with it is a song by the contemporary American composer, William Roy, *How Do I Love Thee?*, based on the famous sonnet by Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Both selections are rendered by Miss Swarthout with tenderness and poignant beauty. Gibner King's accompaniment enhances her performance.

Spirituals. Marian Anderson (contralto) accompanied by Franz Rupp (piano). 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-1238. \$5.

It is hardly necessary to more than list the contents of this album and state that all of the selections have been faithfully recorded. Marian Anderson is certainly one of the best-loved concert and radio artists, and many of the spirituals included in this collection are known to her vast audiences which may conservatively be counted in the millions.

The selections that Miss Anderson has chosen for this album are: *Nobody Knows the Trouble I See*; *Ride on, King Jesus*; *Hear de Lam's A-cryin'*; *Sinner, Please*; *Honor, Honor*; *My Lord, What a Morning*; *Soon-A Will Be Done*; *Were You There?*; *On Ma Journey*; and *De Gospel Train*.

Songs of Old Vienna (Vol. II). Sung in German.

Max Lichtegg (tenor) with the Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra conducted by Victor Reinshagen. 3-12" discs in album. London Set LA-25. \$7.35.

Max Lichtegg, a pleasing tenor with an excellent voice, presents selections from a number of Viennese operettas with the support of an appropriate orchestra. If you are in the mood for such music, this album will surely be very welcome.

In this collection are three selections by Johann Strauss, Jr.: *Lagunen Walzer* from "Eine Nacht in Venedig"; *Du Marchensstadt im Donautal* from "Das Spitzentuch der Konigin"; and *Wein, Wein und Gesang*. Two selection are by Franz Lehar; *Napoli-*

tana from "Der Zarewitsch" and *Hab' ein blaues Himmelbett* from "Frasquita." The final number is *Rose vom Stambul* from Leo Fall's operetta of the same name.

Eili, Eili (trad.—arr. Bass). One side and **A Cantor for a Sabbath** (trad.—arr. Bass). Jan Peerce (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Warner Bass. 1-12" disc (V-12-0376). \$1.25.

With the Jewish holidays approaching, this disc should find a ready sale. The famous *Eili, Eili* is superbly sung with sincere reverence by Mr. Peerce, and on the reverse side of this record this fine artist shows his versatility by the witty manner in which he renders *A Cantor for a Sabbath*. This latter selection is a humorous folk song dealing with the impressions of three men—a tailor, a blacksmith and a teamster—concerning a new cantor who comes to their town. *Eili, Eili* is sung in Hebrew; *A Cantor for a Sabbath*, in Yiddish.

Romberg: When I Grow Too Old To Dream.

One side, and **Romberg: Wanting You** (from "The New Moon"). Dorothy Kirsten (soprano) and Robert Merrill (baritone), with Russ Case and his Orchestra. 1-10" disc (V-10-1423). \$1.

Miss Kirsten and Mr. Merrill have stepped from the stage of the Metropolitan to the dais of a refined night club and present these popular selections with just enough operatic flair to attract the customer's attention and bring copious applause.

PIANO



Satie: Trois Morceaux en Forme de Poire. Robert and Gaby Casadesus, duo-pianists. 3-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-763. \$3.90.

This composition, like most of the music of Erik Satie, is to be listened to with the mind rather than with the ears. Thus it will very likely appeal to a comparatively small number of music lovers. Satie was primarily a wit. Although he composed music from his youth on, it was not until he was forty years of age that he seriously studied composition. It is interesting to note that while he gave many of his pieces silly titles, he was meticulous in their composition, often making numerous corrections until they were just as he wanted them.

The present work for two pianos entitled "Three Pieces in the Shape of a Pear" was said to have been written because Debussy told Satie that his music was interesting but lacked form. In it he shows his aversion to impressionism. We can well imagine that much of it was written with the composer's tongue in his cheek.

For those who would like to investigate a musical novelty, this album is indicated. The music is in the very able hands of Mr. and Mrs. Casadesus and has been nicely recorded by Columbia.

Bach: Toccata in D major (Fantasia and Fugue). (Peters Vol. IX, No. 3). Guiomar Novaës (piano). 2-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-298. \$2.90.

This lovely little Bach work is superbly interpreted by the distinguished Brazilian pianist, Guiomar Novaës. The recording was made at Liederkranz Hall (New York) upon Miss Novaës' last visit to this country, and the piano reproduction is particularly fine. Bach enthusiasts will surely wish to add this item to their collections.

Kodaly: Dances of Marosszék. Three sides, and **Kodaly: Il Pleut dans la Ville and Transylvanian Lament** (Both from "Seven Pieces for Piano" Op. 11). Andor Foldes (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Vox Set 609. \$3.50.

This set will undoubtedly appeal to persons of Hungarian extraction who can recognize and appreciate the Transylvanian dances used as thematic material. The rest of us can hardly associate this naive and uninteresting music with the composer we know chiefly through *Hary Janos* and the *Dances from Galanta*. (An exception might be scholars interested in Transylvania folk dance tunes.) We found this to be music of little substance, and surely of no enduring quality. The two short pieces on the final side are a little more pithy. Andor Foldes, being a Hungarian and a good pianist evidently performs with authority. The tone of the piano is fairly good, except that it is recorded with a somewhat tremulous and wavery pitch, and is overlaid with a generous amount of surface noise.

S.

Bach—tr. Liszt: Prelude and Fugue in A minor. Byron Janis (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0379). \$1.25.

This record, his first RCA Victor recording, will introduce to many the brilliant young American pianist, Byron Janis. Mr. Janis is back home after one of the most triumphant South American tours on record. During three months he gave over a score of concerts in ten cities and, according to reports, to packed houses on every occasion. Janis is now in New York City preparing for a nationwide tour following his Carnegie Hall debut late in October.

The present disc has been splendidly recorded and is a fine example of the technical ability of this rising young artist. It is worthy of the investigation of all those who are interested in piano recordings.

Chopin Favorites. First Piano Quartet. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-1227. \$4.75.

The previous recordings of the First Piano Quartet have met with wide favor, and it would seem that

the present release should enjoy considerable popularity. The following Chopin selections have been arranged for four pianos and are included in this attractive album: *Three Ecossaises, Op. 72; Etude in E, Op. 10, No. 3; Nocturne in E-flat, Op. 9, No. 2; Waltz in C sharp minor, Op. 64, No. 2; Etude in G-flat, Op. 10, No. 5* ("Black Keys"); *Prelude in D-flat, Op. 28, No. 15* ("Raindrop"); and *Fantaisie-Improvisu in C-sharp minor, Op. 66*.

Waltzes of Tchaikovsky. Vitya Vronsky and Victor Babin (duo-pianists). 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-760. \$6.

Victor Babin of the famous team of Vronsky and Babin has arranged several of Tchaikovsky's most popular waltzes for two pianos, and they may be heard on these discs. They make very pleasant listening and the performances are of high artistic merit.

The selections contained in this album are: *Waltz from "Serenade in C major for String Orchestra, Op. 48"; Valse Sentimentale, Op. 51, No. 6; Waltz from "Eugene Onegin, Op. 24;" Waltz from "The Swan Lake Ballet, Op. 20;" and Waltz of the Flowers from "Nutcracker Suite, Op. 71a."*

Chopin: Barcarolle in F-sharp, Op. 60. Artur Rubinstein (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0378). \$1.25.

Many of the great pianists have made recordings of this popular Chopin selection, including Gieseking, Moiseiwitsch, Brailowsky and Cortot, and in fact Rubinstein recorded it for H.M.V. quite a few years ago. We presume the present recording is a new one and not a re-pressing of the early H.M.V. version. In any case the reproduction is excellent and Mr. Rubinstein's many admirers will doubtless find this item of prime interest.

ORGAN



Vierne: Symphony No. 1—Finale. Claire Coci playing the Aeolian Skinner Organ at the Chapel, Westminster Choir College, Princeton, N. J. 1-12" disc (Adelphia 0-1003). \$3.

Mozart: Fantasia in F. Claribel Thomson playing the Aeolian Skinner Organ at St. Mary's, Hamilton Village, Philadelphia. 1-12" disc (Adelphia 0-1004). \$3.

Two more discs in Adelphia's series of outstanding organ recordings! Without any fanfare, and little but word-of-mouth publicity, this series has met with unusual acceptance all over the country. Those discerning music lovers who know high fidelity organ recordings when they hear them have spread the word, and that which started out as a purely al-

truistic venture has become a reasonably successful commercial undertaking.

Those who are making a collection of Adelphia recordings will surely be interested in these two new discs, and those who are not acquainted with them will find either of the present records a fine introduction.

VIOLIN



Khatchaturian: Chant Poème. Anahid Ajemian (violin) accompanied by Maro Ajemian (piano). One side, and **Bartók: Rondo No. 1 on a Folk Tune and Bartók: Bulgarian Dance No. 1** (From "Mikrokosmos"). Maro Ajemian (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0343). \$1.25.

RCA Victor has recently signed an exclusive contract with the very able violinist, Anahid Ajemian and her sister Maro, an equally fine pianist. This first record by the Ajemian sisters shows very clearly why RCA Victor was anxious to place them under contract. It contains music that not everyone will fancy, but the discerning music lover will doubtless think it worth investigation.

Heifetz-Dinicu: Hora Staccato. One side, and **Milhaud: Tijuca** (from "Saudades do Brazil"). Isaac Stern (violin) accompanied by Alexander Zakin (piano). 1-10" disc (C-17541D). \$1.

The brilliant young violinist, Isaac Stern, tosses off these lively and attractive selections with seeming ease. Fine reproduction is an added feature.

VIOLONCELLO



Bruch: Kol Nidrei, Op 47—Adagio. Gregor Piatigorsky (violoncello) with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (C-12882D). \$1.25.

Some ten years ago Pablo Casals made a complete recording of this work with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Landon Ronald. For a work that is not particularly well-known, it achieved reasonable popularity. There is always the question of whether Bruch made his setting of *Kol Nidrei* with the thought of the synagogue or the concert hall in mind. To us that is not too important because it is certainly beautiful music, and as such may be easily enjoyed. Piatigorsky has selected the lovely *Adagio* from this work, and with the fine support of the Philadelphia Orchestra produces a record that should have a wide appeal.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$9.75.

The Concert Companion. By Robert Bagar and Louis Biancolli with an introduction by Deems Taylor. xi + 868 pp. Whittlesey House (New York). Price \$7.50.

The Art of Judging Music. By Virgil Thomson. x+318+xviii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$4.25.

The Record Book (International Edition). By David Hall. xii + 1394 pp. Oliver Durrell, Inc. (New York). Price \$7.50.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

A Dictionary of Musical Themes. Compiled by Harold Barlow and Sam Morgenstern with an introduction by John Erskine. xiii + 656 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CE—Cetra, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CT—Concertone, D—Decca, DI—Disc, GIO—Gregorian, Inst. of America, HU—Harvard Film Service, HW—Hargail, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, L—London Gramophone, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, OK—Okeh, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Schrimmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technicord, V—Victor, and VX—Vox, W—Woodwind.

The New Records

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By mail to any address
50c per year

Harold Bauer, His Book. By Harold Bauer. 306 pp. Illustrated. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$3.75.

We have had several very happy hours. We have just finished Harold Bauer's book which is listed above. Mr. Bauer has had a long and eventful career with over fifty years of it spent before the public on the concert platform—first as a violinist and finally as a pianist. At present, at the age of seventy-four, he is actively engaged in editorial work of a musical nature and is also associated with two music schools—one in New York and the other in Hartford. His immense energy, which is indicated in his book, seems to have diminished very little, for although he has retired from the concert platform, he is kept more than busy and active with his present rather arduous duties.

His book is a pleasant one. It reveals that he has a prodigious memory, if not for dates, certainly for the many unique and often humorous experiences he has had in his long career before the public. We doubt whether any musician has met and become acquainted with more important persons in the field of music than has Harold Bauer. Certainly no one that we know of has remembered so many intimate little details about the great and near-great in the musical world of the last sixty years.

He starts out very bravely with, "My earliest reaction to music, as far as I can recall . . ."—but from then on chronology is entirely disregarded and he wanders to and fro from one side of the globe to the other without paying any attention to relative dates. He explains toward the end of the volume that he never kept a diary and is not good at remembering dates. This explanation is hardly necessary for the reader would surely guess this after the first

few chapters. For us this was in no way a defect. As a matter of fact, it rather added to the unconventional charm of the narrative. One has the impression that Mr. Bauer is having a genial conversation with the reader, relating to him his experiences, and giving him his thoughts on various subjects, just as they come into his mind. Often he jumps ahead for a decade or two and then retraces his steps when he recalls some interesting or amusing incident that occurred previously. It is all very delightful.

Harold Bauer, His Book is one of those volumes that one can open in the middle and read either way with equal enjoyment—there is much worthwhile and entertaining reading no matter which direction the reader takes.

* * *

RCA Victor has recently announced the reinstatement, by popular demand, of several sets long missing from its catalog. Inasmuch as all of these sets have been reviewed previously at the time of their initial issue, we feel that it is sufficient merely to list them at this time. The issue of THE NEW RECORDS containing the review is given with each set.

Hindemith: Sonata No. 3, 1939. Paul Hindemith (viola) and Jesús María Sanromaná (piano). Seven sides, and **Campos: Laura y Georgina.** Jesús María Sanromaná (piano). 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-572. \$5. (TNR May '40).

Bach: Chorales. The Trapp Family Choir, directed by Dr. Franz Wasner. 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-713. \$5 (TNR December '40).

Beethoven: Consecration of the House Overture, Op. 124. Three sides, and **Paisiello: The Barber of Seville—Overture.** The Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-618. \$3.50. (TNR December '39).

Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. Nine sides, and **Beethoven: Ruins of Athens Overture, Op. 113.** Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Arnold Rose. 5-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-426. \$7.25. (TNR April '38).

Music of the Renaissance. Max Meili (tenor) accompanied by Fritz Wörsching (lute). 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-495. \$4.75. (TNR November '38).

Hindemith: Sonata in F major, Op. 41, No. 4. William Primrose (viola) and Jesús María Sanromaná (piano). 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-547. \$3.50. (TNR April '39).

Brahms: Six Intermezzi and Two Rhapsodies. Artur Rubinstein (piano). 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-893. \$6. (TNR May '42).

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BACK COPIES

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ORCHESTRA



Debussy: Jeux—Poème Dansé. Symphony Orchestra of the Augusteo, Rome, conducted by Victor de Sabata. 2-12" discs (V-DB-6493 and V-DB-6494) (manual sequence). \$5.25.

Shortly after the Russian Ballet produced Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du Printemps*, Diaghilev requested Debussy to write music for a ballet which the dancer

Nijinsky had in mind. It was based on a modern theme, the subject being "a plastic vindication of the man of 1913." The plot has to do with the loss of a tennis ball which a young man and two girls are trying to find. In looking for it they go through a number of childish pranks: play hide and seek, try to catch each other, and finally quarrel and sulk. The climax comes when an unknown hand tosses another ball onto the court. The characters, surprised and alarmed, quickly disappear.

Jeux was first danced in Paris in the spring of 1913. It was not a success and quickly disappeared from the ballet repertory. The music without the dancers was played at the Concerts Colonne about a year later but was greeted with only modest acclaim. Many French critics of the time thought that it was worthy of considerable praise; some thought that it was better than *La Mer*, but the public generally did not care much for it, and since its early performances little has been heard of it. Debussy was greatly disappointed, for he had spent much time and composed the work with the greatest care; he blamed its failure on Nijinsky's odd choreography. In writing to a friend the composer said: "Nijinsky's perverse genius is entirely devoted to peculiar mathematical processes. The man adds up demi-semiquavers with his feet, and proves the result with his arms. Then, as if suddenly stricken with partial paralysis, he stands listening to the music with a most baleful eye . . . It is ugly; Dalcrozian in fact."

As we listened to this recording, we could not help thinking of Stravinsky. Did two great minds run in the same channel? Both composers were writing music for the ballet at the same time. Students of Debussy will welcome these discs for it is the first time that *Jeux* has been recorded; and to our mind it has been very well done by the present fine orchestra under the able direction of Victor de Sabata. For those who acquire records only for enjoyment, we suggest a hearing before purchasing. R.

Dvorák: Symphony No. 4 in G, Op. 88. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-770. \$6.

Bruno Walter enjoys a position today which is unique among conductors. He is playing only music which he likes, or rather loves, and music in which he is therefore considered a specialist. His programs with the Philharmonic consist of his prime favorites, as do his guest appearance programs, and therefore his recordings are culled from these works. All recent Walter recordings with the Philadelphia and New York Orchestras bear this out. However, his favorites are not entirely overworked fare. Bruckner, for example, is one of his particular joys, and such items as the Dvorák *Fourth Symphony* turn up also.

Walter's interpretive gifts are highly in evidence

throughout the luscious reading he serves us in this symphony. He has severe competition from Talich and the Czech Orchestra (Vic. DM-304). Both men play with a keen feeling for the Bohemian flavor of the score, to which Walter adds a virtuoso touch. The Walter conducting, as is frequently the case these days, has almost dangerous virtuosity, and the skill of the orchestra used is relied upon heavily to carry off his magnificent conceptions. It works well in this case, for the orchestra plays with fine discipline (it has to, or there would be chaos!). The reproduction is good.

Rather than attempt any description of the music, we would simply like to make an earnest plea to those who know Dvorák only by his "New World" Symphony. Please treat yourself to another Dvorák symphony equally as enjoyable—the *Fourth*, considered by many to be his best. Affelder's program notes in the album will provide a good background of the music for you. S.

Elgar: Pomp and Circumstance Marches. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Warwick Braithwaite. 2-12" discs in album. London Set LA-23. \$5.25.

Of the six Pomp and Circumstance military marches that Elgar composed, the first four are the most popular, and numerous recordings of them have been made available. In the present instance these four are contained in an album played by the London Symphony conducted by Warwick Braithwaite. They are performed with fine spirit and make excellent examples of the now famous London "full range recording."

Prokofieff: "Classical" Symphony in D, Op. 25. Three sides, and Prokofieff: *Chout, Ballet Suite No. 1*—Danse Finale. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1241. \$3.50.

Since the time, around 1930, when Victor released the first recording of the *Classical Symphony* by Koussevitzky (7196/7), his performance has been the criterion. Through the years his readings of this work have remained unchallenged. Victor was foolish to have issued a new recording a while back by Golschmann and the St. Louis Orchestra, rather than have Koussevitzky remake the set. But now all is forgiven and the prudent step has been taken. The reproduction is competent but not outstanding. Other versions of this work, beside the two mentioned above, are good: namely Mitropoulos, who points up the humor quite well, and Ormandy, who etches the music with customary precision. But most folks admit Koussevitzky has an extra something that makes this work "his."

The final side of this set brings a much needed recording. Actually it is only a teaser, for the complete *Chout Ballet Suite* should be issued. Albert Wolff conducted the suite on Polydor records which

some of us have heard, or own. The ballet is an absurd farce, and the music is capital, all about buffoons, one outwitting seven others. It is briefly outlined in the album notes which accompany this set. The Danse Finale, presented here, depicts the glorious merry-making that Chout and his wife indulge in after outwitting the merchant and the seven other buffoons. We think it is great, and we hope for a speedy end of the recording ban, so that we may continue wishing for a good modern set of the whole thing. S.

Wagner: Tristan and Isolde—Prelude and Love-Death. Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1230. \$3.50. (Vinylite, DV-21, \$5.)

Last November Rodzinski and the Chicago Orchestra gave a concert performance of *Tristan* with Flagstad and Svanholm that was reputedly an affair of the first magnitude. It is a pity the whole thing was not recorded (we recall hearing rumors that it was to be) for there would be a ready market for such a set. However, the day after the performance they recorded the *Prelude* and *Liebtestod*. It turns out to be a mighty small consolation, for the present records in no way compare to Victor's DM-653 with Furtwängler and the Berlin Philharmonic, either interpretively or reproductively. Furtwängler's reading is the almost impossible combination of strong and noble form with a searing passion that retains its dignity. His reading beggars description, and the orchestra plays like something angelic, the recording capturing it all with great fidelity. Recordings by Muck, Klemperer, and Stokowski, and actual performances by others have all moved us with their individual merits, but Furtwängler surpasses them all.

To get back to Rodzinski, his *Prelude* is indeed good but not too vital, his *Liebtestod* a shade hurried in spots. But his shortcomings are as nothing compared to the recording engineers. We found the vinylite pressing somewhat better than the shellac, but both lacked the clarity and purity of tone so necessary. They did not sound as good as other Chicago recordings by RCA Victor. Our advice to anyone is to get the Furtwängler set; it can't be topped. S.

Strauss: Ein Heldenleben, Op. 40. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 5-12" discs in album (V-DB-9204 to V-DB-9208) (automatic sequence). \$13.13.

The British reviewers greeted this set with unusual warmth a few months ago when it made its appearance. Not only was it conducted by their favorite son, but (while they did not mention this) it marked the first recording of the work made in England, whose catalogs are somewhat lean in Richard Strauss' works. In fact, five other record-

ings of this work are listed in the Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia; three of them were made in America. Mengelberg began the procession with a massive reading; Ormandy came along some years later with a four-square job; Rodzinski was on his heels with another fine reading; and, but three months ago, Fritz Reiner appeared with a new set (Col. MM-748). Reiner's reading found high favor with nearly all the critics in this country and received our high praises, too.

Comparing Reiner's set with Beecham's is actually not interesting at all, although comparisons usually are. Their readings are so similar that at times it is hard to tell them apart. In the final analysis, Beecham is a bit clearer in detail, and the reproduction of his set a bit more finely etched. But these bits are hardly worth the wide difference in price, except for those who succumb to the spell of things imported, rare, and expensive. The rest of us may safely choose Reiner's thoughtful and well controlled interpretation, knowing we have the best of the domestic versions, and one equal to the challenge of Beecham's imported version.

Having heard this work several times in a few months, we found a renewed interest in the work, and feel compelled to say a few words in praise of the music as well as its various performances. It is about the last of Strauss' great tone-poems, and built around an elaborate program in which any of us might picture himself as the hero. The power and poetry have quite a pull which you might enjoy investigating again.

Revueltas: Sensemaya. One side, and **Granados: Goyescas**—Intermezzo. Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-12-0470). \$1.25. Also available in vinylite (V-18-1069). \$2.

The *Intermezzo* from "Goyescas" is lush music, replete with typical Spanish melodies and rippling with fanciful rhythms. *Sensemaya*, which has no literal translation, is a composition inspired by the verses of a Cuban poet who took as his subject matter the oppression and suffering of a secret society of African Negroes. It is this spirit of pain and oppression, and the revolt against this condition, that find expression in barbaric rhythms that twist and turn, reaching a fiery climax. Stokowski's orchestra, composed of first desk players in leading New York symphony and radio orchestras, extracts the full essence of both compositions.

The lifelike reproduction achieved by RCA Victor on this disc is worthy of especial mention.

Motion Picture Favorites. André Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-750. \$4.90.

Kostelanetz has chosen hits from some of the outstanding musical pictures that have appeared dur-

ing the last ten years and his arrangements of these memorable tunes are contained in this pleasing album. They are in the typical Kostelanetz style, and the popular conductor's host of fans will very likely go for them in a big way. They have been expertly recorded.

The selections are: *September Song* from "Knickerbocker Holiday;" *It's a Grand Night for Singing* from "State Fair;" "*Sweet Leilani* from "Waikiki Wedding;" *Carioca* from "Flying Down to Rio;" *A Foggy Day* from "Damsel in Distress;" *Thanks for the Memory* from "Big Broadcast of 1938;" *Sweet and Lovely* from "Two Girls and a Sailor;" and *I'll Take Romance* from the picture of the same name.

Williams: The Dream of Olwen. One side, and **Williams: Incidental Music.** (Both from the film "While I Live"). Charles Williams and his Concert Orchestra. 1-12" disc (C-72688D). \$1.25.

It is reported that *The Dream of Olwen* is one of the most popular current selections in England. It is the sort of piece that might take hold in this country after it has been widely heard. The present disc may start the ball rolling. It is very similar to Adinsell's *Warsaw Concerto* which swept this country a few years ago. Like it there are solo passages for the piano, which in this instance are played by Arthur Dulay. The reverse side of this disc contains additional incidental music from the English film from which *The Dream of Olwen* is taken. The recording has been very satisfactorily accomplished.

Saint Saëns: Samson et Dalila, Op. 47—Bacchanale (Ballet Music) (Act III). One side, and **Halvorsen: March of the Boyards.** The Carnegie "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Charles O'Connell. 1-12" disc (C-7616-M). \$1.25.

Two tuneful selections that are favorites with the "Pops" audiences—nicely played and splendidly recorded.

CONCERTO



Vaughan Williams: Concerto for Oboe and Strings. Mitchell Miller (oboe) and the Saidenberg Little Symphony conducted by Daniel Saidenberg. Five sides, and **Milan**—arr. Johnson: **Pavana** (1536) and **Giga.** Mitchell Miller (English horn) and the Saidenberg Little Symphony conducted by Daniel Saidenberg. 3-12" discs in album. Mercury Set DM-7. \$5.23.

The blue ribbon this month goes to Vaughan Williams' *Oboe Concerto*, which will prove to be one of the year's outstanding sets. It is as close to perfection as is necessary. First, the music itself is of unquestionable worth; the performance by Mitchell Miller is exquisite and the accompaniment likewise;

the reproduction is of today's very best; and the album housing it is beautiful.

Vaughan Williams has written some music of harshness and acerbity, some music of idyllic and pastorale hues, some of mystery and modal qualities, some of folklore background. The *Oboe Concerto* is of the reflective, warm, poetic variety that casts a spell upon the listener. As in the *Fantasia on a Theme of Tallis*, there is often the ecclesiastical coloring. There is also nice contrast in the Minuet and Musette, second movement, a little gem. The Finale Scherzo is mercurial, jovial and serene, with a fine epilogue. We are quite smitten with this work.

Mitchell Miller is by now well known for his great artistry as an oboist and musician. His performance could hardly be bettered, and Saidenberg, a man of high taste, provides a marvelous accompaniment.

The final side of this set contains two choice numbers by the Valencian court musician and virtuoso, Luis Milan. The American, William Spencer has transcribed these Spanish lute pieces for English horn and strings, which Mitchell Miller plays with commanding style, rounding out this album very nicely. By all means investigate this splendid set.

S.

Mozart: Concerto in A, K. 488. Clifford Curzon (piano) with the National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-53. \$7.35.

We found this music irresistible from beginning to end. Its sweet, poetic, lyrical phrases are unmistakably Mozart in their sincerity and freshness. It is lighter fare than some other Mozart piano concertos because its general complexion is lighthearted and the themes themselves not quite as weighty as one might expect. The form of the first movement is somewhat different from the usual in that the development is based on a subsidiary theme introduced just before the development section. It almost seems as though Mozart pulled a new theme out just in time to make the development section. The effect is heightened by the fact that the original theme appears in the recapitulation, sounding refreshing as well as familiar. But whether or not you care to examine its form, this movement is bound to please anyone with a grain of melodic appreciation. After the opening *Allegro*, there follows a lovely *Andante* of gentle simplicity, and lastly a *Presto* in rondo form. The rondo is, of course, in great contrast to its preceding movement, and is composed of numerous themes which seem to follow one on the heels of the other. It bounces along at a merry pace, with occasional touches of humor, culminating in a racy finale. Yes, K. 488 is like a drink of cool water right from the spring.

Curzon provides an exemplary performance excelling in lightness and clarity, yet knowing and

penetrating. Boyd Neel is well known as a sober and sensitive conductor of the old masters, and his ministrations are always beneficial to the music. This set was made in Kingsway Hall; the reproduction is fine, if not the best example of *ffrr*. Previous versions offer no serious competition, including Denis Matthews' set on English Columbia of a few years ago (reviewed May 1946).

S.

Beethoven: Concerto No. 4 in G, Op. 58. Robert Casadesus (piano) with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-744. \$6. (Vinylite, MMV-744. \$9.)

No reviewer can tackle a performance of the Beethoven *Fourth Concerto* without stepping on a lot of toes, for the subtleties of this remarkable score have resolved themselves into different meanings for various listeners. The high priest of Beethoven concerto playing, Artur Schnabel, has recorded this work three times, and his reading is generally labeled marvelous and used as a yardstick. It has a lyric warmth and understanding that are truly great. Yet we always liked the Gieseking performance for the sheer beauty of his playing. Now Casadesus comes along with another rendition that is also bristling with merit. Casadesus is always an artist of exquisite taste and digital excellence. His playing of the concerto again proves those qualities, but we would prefer a shade more freedom and warmth, more plasticity. Ormandy's accompaniment is adjusted to the soloist perfectly, for he, too, is at home in a sober-faced, four square performance. The orchestra plays with perfect finish, making this set as technically perfect as they come. If you do not look too deeply into this music, the performance should be very satisfying; but if you are a rabid Beethovenite, you will find it a bit too brittle. Casadesus uses his own cadenzas in the end movements, and we thought they were fine. The reproduction has perspective—a very nice concert hall effect. Recorded just before the ban, it probably was done with the single microphone system.

S.

Schumann: Concerto in A minor, Op. 54. Rudolf Serkin (piano) with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-734. \$6. (Vinylite, MMV-734. \$9.)

This set was released several months ago; however, the review copy arrived late and was inadvertently omitted from the following issue. We therefore give it our attention this month, and find it a pleasure to do so, for it turns out to be the best Schumann Concerto so far, on domestic discs. Although it ranks high in popularity, it has not fared well on records, and until this past March, there were no satisfying sets available. In March, Rubinstein's set appeared (Vic. DM-1176), and we were most anxious to give it a welcome. Its chief drawback was the orchestral

accompaniment, and Rubinstein's rather straightforward approach. The new set by Serkin certainly rectifies the accompaniment situation, for Ormandy gives generously here. Serkin's performance is a good compromise between the prosaic and the sentimental. The romantic approach is there but well disciplined, and kept within a solid framework. The performance is well integrated, which is important, for this work has a score that is more than a trifling accompaniment. The reproduction is not Columbia's best; our set was coarse-toned in the heavy passages.

Schumann claimed he could not write a concerto, and after a few attempts he turned out a *Fantasie* for piano and orchestra. After a number of years of vain attempts to get the *Fantasie* published, he added to it two movements, the *Intermezzo* and the *Finale*, and presented it as his *A Minor Piano Concerto*. Lovely from beginning to end, it has found favor with the critics and the music lovers, and remains a cornerstone of the concerto repertoire. S.

Corelli: Oboe Concerto. Evelyn Rothwell (oboe) with the Hallé Orchestra conducted by John Barbirolli. 1-12" disc (V-C-3540). \$2.

"As dainty as a fine lace handkerchief" might be one way to describe this little Corelli piece. Evelyn Rothwell (Mrs. John Barbirolli) is no Tabuteau (Philadelphia Orchestra), but she is quite equal to the present task. It is hard to tell which is the more dainty—the piece itself or Miss Rothwell's performance of it. At the conclusion, one would hesitate to clap one's hands, but would be rather inclined to tap two fingers of one hand gently on the palm of the other.

Saint-Saëns: Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Op. 22. Benno Moiseivitch (piano) with The Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Basil Cameron. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1255. \$4.75.

The last time we heard this music was in April 1947, when reviewing the Moura Lympny set (EDA-24). At that time we liked the music, and after hearing it again we like it still more. This work deserves more performances on the basis of its appeal. Also, it is a fine display piece for the virtuoso pianist; he can "wow" an audience with this one.

Moiseivitch is known to many through his English recordings, some of which Victor has repressed. The present set is an example of this artist in top-notch form. His playing is splendid and his reading stirring; the orchestral portion is capably set forth. The reproduction is super British, HMV variety, which is superlative indeed. Yes, we enjoyed every bit of this album and urge you to try it.

The *Concerto No. 2* was written more or less at Anton Rubinstein's instigation. Rubinstein had planned a concert at the Salle Pleyel in Paris and invited Saint-Saëns to participate, possibly with a new concerto. The deadline for the concert was approx-

imately three weeks. Since plans for a second concerto had been materializing in Saint-Saëns' mind for some time, it took him only seventeen days to complete the work. A year later Saint-Saëns sent the score to Liszt for criticism and advice, and received a long and detailed account from the older man, virtually all of it praise. We think it is a charming example of romantic music, and recommend it highly. The current album is to be preferred to the Decca set by Lympny mainly because it is substantially lower in price. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC

Shostakovich: Quartet No. 3, Op. 73. Fine Arts Quartet of the American Broadcasting Co. 4-12" discs in album. Mercury Set DM-3. \$6.53.

This work dates from the summer of 1946 and was first heard in America during the spring of the succeeding year (broadcast by the present Fine Arts Quartet). It is written in an entirely different vein from the composer's very pleasing first quartet, which was so felicitously played by the Stuyvesant String Quartet for Columbia some five years ago (Col. MX-231).

In his notes that accompany the present album, Edward Tatnall Canby says quite correctly that "The Third Quartet is in itself a picture of the composer's current musical activity" and further, that it "sums up Shostakovich's peculiar tonal idiom, mixture of consonance and violent dissonance, and the characteristic devices of melody and instrumentation he has developed through his already long experience as composer."

It might very well be that in his first quartet Shostakovich consciously or unconsciously wrote music that might appeal to the bourgeois and received a nudge from Uncle Joe to about-face. Whether he received the nudge or not we do not know, but we do know that he turned in another direction and the present work is in an entirely different idiom. To us it is interesting in parts but decidedly uneven. For those who would like to study it in detail, Mr. Canby has analyzed each of the five movements, not quite note by note but certainly most carefully.

The Fine Arts Quartet gives a brilliant performance and the reproduction rates with the best of modern recording. R.

Beethoven: Quartet No. 16 in F major, Op. 135. Loewenguth Quartet. 4-12" discs in album (V-C-7714 to V-C-7717) (automatic sequence). \$7.98.

We are still awaiting an entirely satisfactory recording of this last complete composition of the immortal Beethoven. To put it quickly, the earlier version played by the Budapest Quartet is superior

in rendition but the reproduction, for some unknown reason, is not all that it might be; the Columbia engineers missed out on this one—too much tubby bass. The present version by the Loewenguth Quartet has been well recorded by the English technicians, but the players seem to miss the points that Beethoven unquestionably was trying to make on several occasions as they proceed with the performance. The composer marked the score for them, but they did not heed his suggestions.

There is much beauty in the work; it is much easier to enjoy than the more serious quartets (Opera 130, 131 and 132) which precede it. Let us hope that someday soon we may have a performance and a recording that is worthy of this delightful composition.

Viennese Waltzes. Alexander Schneider String Quartet. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-766. \$6.

These seven waltzes, full of the warmth and gaiety in one of the great periods of Viennese history, were "discovered" in the archives of the Library of Congress. They were scored for an unusual combination of instruments: three violins, viola and bass and this same instrumentation is used in the present Columbia album. Joseph Lanner, composer of four of the waltzes in the album, is generally credited with being the founder of Viennese dance music. Lanner organized his own chamber music ensemble in the early years of the 19th century in which he played the violin and Johann Strauss, the viola.

In addition to Lanner's original waltzes, this album includes such operatic potpourris as his *Mozartian Waltzes*, employing themes from *Don Giovanni* and the *Magic Flute*; the merry and fiery *Inseparables* waltz by Johann Strauss, Sr., and two engaging waltzes by his son, Josef Strauss. They are played in the authentic baroque mood by Alexander Schneider, formerly a member of the Budapest String Quartet, and his associates.

We cannot imagine more dignified and altogether pleasing dinner music.

Bentzon: Racconto, No. 3, Op. 31. W. Wolsing (oboe), P. Allin Ericksen (clarinet), and Kjell Roikger (bassoon). 1-12" disc (V-DB-5285). \$2.63.

This disc will serve to introduce to many Americans the work of the modern Danish composer, Jorgen Bentzon (1897-), whose compositions have appeared on the programs of various Chamber Music Festivals on the other side of the Atlantic. Many of us have read of Mr. Bentzon's music but few of us have had an opportunity of hearing any of it; the present disc is therefore particularly welcome.

Mr. Bentzon is a pupil of Carl Nielson and is noted for his modern contrapuntal style. His work

so far has been largely in the field of chamber music, much of it for a combination of woodwinds. The present composition is said to be a typical example of his work in that field.

Bach: English Suite No. 3 in G minor. F. Oubradous (bassoon), M. Morel (oboe), and P. Lefebvre (clarinet). 1-10" disc (OL-120). \$1.60.

Bach: French Suite No. 3 in B minor. F. Oubradous (bassoon), M. Morel (oboe), and P. Lefebvre (clarinet). 1-10" disc (OL-121). \$1.60.

From time to time we have been listing records from the famous L'Oiseau-Lyre catalog. Here are two unusual chamber music recordings that should find favor with discerning music lovers. The artists are of outstanding merit and the reproduction is well up to the high standard set by this distinguished French publisher.

Mozart: Quartet No. 1 in G minor for Piano and Strings, K. 478. George Szell (piano), J. Roismann (violin), B. Kroyt (viola), and M. Schneider (violincello). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-773. \$4.75.

An excellent recording of the second of Mozart's two piano quartets (Quartet No. 2 in E flat, K. 493—Columbia Set MM-669) was released in May 1947, and enjoyed a reasonable popularity, considering the fact that neither of these chamber works are often performed. This month the same players complete their job with an equally fine recording of the first quartet of the pair. It is a welcome addition to the catalog, because the only other recording of it, made by Schnabel and Members of the Pro Arte Quartet, was withdrawn from the RCA Victor lists a long time ago.

OPERA



Mozart: Die Entführung aus dem Serail, K. 384—I was heedless in my rapture (Act I). One side, and **Thomas: Mignon—**Behold Titania! (Act II). (Sung in English). Gwen Catley (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Hugh Rignold. 1-12" disc (V-C-3696). \$2.

This exceptionally fine record will probably introduce to many music lovers on this side of the Atlantic a truly remarkable coloratura soprano, Miss Gwen Catley. Miss Catley has a voice of great beauty and flexibility, and in addition, she is an artist of rare sensibility. Her rendition of the Mozart aria on this disc is one that any singer might study with profit. After one has listened to it all the way through, he has the very definite urge immediately to repeat it, for he feels that he has just heard something quite remarkable.

The famous Polonaise from "Mignon," which one

finds when he turns over this disc, is just as well sung, but one has a kind of funny feeling when Miss Catley comes to the lines near the middle of the aria, "Like a Swallow I Fly—Like a Swallow I Fly." When the record is started, one does not think of its being sung in English—the music is such that the words do not mean anything; but suddenly, when Miss Catley is about to "fly like a swallow," they become crystal clear, and it is a shock to say the least. From then on the singer goes into her marvelous coloratura pyrotechnics, and all is well. The fact that the Mozart aria is also sung in English, while it probably does not add anything, does not detract from its charm. R.

CHORAL



Occasional Gregorian Chants. Choristers and Schola of the Holy Cross Parish, St. Louis, directed by the Very Reverend Martin B. Hellriegel. 5-10" discs in album. Gregorian Institute Set OC-2. \$7.88.

Occasional Gregorian Chants. Choristers and Schola of the Holy Cross Parish, St. Louis, directed by the Very Reverend Martin B. Hellriegel. 5-10" discs in album. Gregorian Institute Set OC-3. \$7.88.

Those who are interested in bringing back to the Church the traditional Gregorian Chant, that reached its perfection in the 10th century and then was practically lost for hundreds of years, will wish to investigate these albums we are very sure. As this development will come more easily through the children, these recordings by the young people of Holy Cross Parish (St. Louis) under the able direction of Father Hellriegel should afford inspiration for other groups of boys and girls everywhere.

The first volume (OC-2) contains chants appropriate for Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, and Lent. The second volume (OC-3), for Easter, Ascension, Pentecost, the feasts of The Blessed Virgin, Corpus Christi, and Confessors.

These recordings have been successfully accomplished and the record surfaces are smooth and quiet.

VOCAL



Mahler: Kindertotenlieder. Heinrich Rehkemper (baritone) with Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jascha Horenstein. 3-12" discs in album. Vox Set 644. \$7.

A collector's item appears this month, which is the only recording available of Gustav Mahler's celebrated song-cycle, *Kindertotenlieder*. This will indeed be welcome news to Mahler enthusiasts, for the lamented Moravian composer (born 1860) has a host of fervent admirers and staunch followers.

Mahler was attracted by five poems, taken from a

collection of one hundred, written by Friedrich Rückert on the death of his two children. This is morbid and melancholy fare, but Mahler has invested the poems with music which is characteristically lovely and wistful. The *Kindertotenlieder* is indeed most typical of its composer.

If you are not a Mahler fan, you may find these songs on the depressing side, for after the last record has been played, the effect is one of unutterable sadness. However, no Mahler collection is complete without this celebrated composition.

Heinrich Rehkemper, a baritone who used to flourish in Munich some twenty years ago, sings these songs with a deep awareness of Rückert's text. Herr Rehkemper is a versatile artist; in Munich you could hear him in as varied roles as Don Giovanni and Amfortas. Always an intelligent and adaptable musician, you will surely appreciate this singer's dignified artistry.

Jascha Horenstein and a symphony orchestra supply the melancholy yet beautiful accompaniment. These records are repressings from the old German Polydor set. They were probably recorded a good many years ago, for the set is listed in the Gramophone Shop's 1936 edition of its Encyclopedia of Recorded Music. Even so, the recording is excellent and quite clear.

Interesting notes are on the front inside cover of the album, and you will find the texts of Rückert's poems on the back. MAX DE SCHAUNSEE.

Fauré: Le Secret, Op. 23, No. 3. One side, and **Fauré: Clair de Lune, Op. 46, No. 2.** (Sung in French). Maggie Teyte (soprano) accompanied by Gerald Moore (piano). 1-10" disc (V-DA-1876). \$1.95.

Some of us can remember Maggie Teyte's debut in the United States which took place over thirty-five years ago and can remember the youthfulness and brilliance of her remarkable voice. Those of us who have these memories will be startled when we listen to this record, which first appeared in England early in the present year. Miss Teyte's voice has lost little, if any, of its freshness and sparkle. If we did not know that these Fauré songs had been recently recorded, we might well think, except for the modern recording technique, that they had been recorded a quarter of a century ago.

True, Miss Teyte no longer attempts long and difficult operatic arias. She devotes herself to selections that are well within her grasp, and in these her truly artistic renditions are comparable to anything that she accomplished in her prime. She is surely a remarkable artist—one who is distinctly in a class by herself. Her many friends in this country will be delighted when they listen to this marvelous little disc.

We would be remiss if we did not ask Gerald Moore to take a bow for the perfection of his support at the piano. R.

English and French Folk Ballads—arr. Britten. Peter Pears (tenor) accompanied by Benjamin Britten (piano). 3-10" discs in album. London Set LA-30. \$3.94.

Here is as charming a little album as one will come across in many a long day. It contains Benjamin Britten's arrangements of various folk songs superbly sung by the English tenor, Peter Pears, who is quite well-known on the concert stage in this country. Mr. Britten is at the piano.

Six of the seven songs in this album are traditional airs of Old England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. The seventh, *Heigh Ho! Heigh Hi!* (Quand j'etais chez mon pere) comes from Britten's collection of eight French folk songs.

The songs from the British Isles range in type from the sombre Border Ballad, *The Bonny Earl O' Moray*, to the lilting jingle of *Oliver Cromwell*, a nursery rhyme from Suffolk County; From *Little Sir William*, a West Country folk song, to *Sweet Polly Oliver*, an air of simple enchantment from the songbag of English minstrelsy. From Wales comes *The Ash Grove*, and from Ireland *The Sally Gardens*—a charming setting of verses by W. B. Yeats, the great Irish poet.

Ezio Pinza in Popular Italian Songs. (Sung in Italian). Ezio Pinza (bass) accompanied by Stevenson Barrett (piano). 3-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-768. \$3.90.

When the celebrated Italian basso, Ezio Pinza, gives a concert, he very often includes a group of just such songs as are to be found in this album—simple popular and folk songs of his native country. As his audiences always greet them with real enthusiasm, it is very likely that these discs will have a rather general appeal to music lovers. They are beautifully sung and splendidly recorded.

In the collection are three Piedmontese folk songs arranged by Leone Sinigaglia: *Novara la bella, Il mariينو*, and *Il cacciatore del bosco*, together with a Venetian folk song, *L'amor xe una pietanza* arranged by Geni Sadero, Sibella's *La Girometta*, and a serenade entitled *Mefisto*, by Beniamino Carelli.

Bennard: The Old Rugged Cross. One side, and **Fearis: Beautiful Isle of Somewhere.** Eleanor Steber (soprano) and Margaret Harshaw (contralto) with Russ Case and his Orchestra. 1-10" disc (V-10-1449). \$1.

This one brings up old memories. Over a quarter of a century ago Harold Jarvis's recording of *Beautiful Isle of Somewhere* and the duet by Mrs. Asher and Homer Rodeheaver of *The Old Rugged Cross* were right at the top of Victor's best sellers list. In those far distant days of the wind-up red mahogany Victrola, nearly every owner of one of those fabulous instruments had one or both of these gospel hymns in his collection. Now two distinguished

members of the Metropolitan Opera offer their versions to present-day record buyers. We will watch the result with keen interest.

Schubert: Der Erlkönig, Op. 1. One side, and **Schubert: An die Musik, Op. 88, No. 4.** Lotte Lehmann (soprano) accompanied by Paul Ulanowsky (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1448). \$1.

We prefer these Schubert songs sung by a male singer, but that is a personal wish, and we would not have mentioned it except for the fact that both of them have been recorded by several eminent baritones. However, Miss Lehmann has accomplished satisfactory renditions and her many admirers will probably welcome this disc. Both selections have been nicely recorded.

Grieg: A Swan, Op. 25, No. 2. One side, and **Grieg: Eros, Op. 70, No. 1.** (Sung in Norwegian). Kirsten Flagstad (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Warwick Braithwaite. 1-10" disc (V-DA-1879). \$1.95.

This most recent record of Miss Flagstad's was released in England in May of this year. She was certainly never in better voice than when she recorded these Grieg songs. While there may be some question as to the interpretation of *A Swan*, the singing of *Eros* with the superb orchestral support of the Philharmonia Orchestra under Warwick Braithwaite calls for the highest praise. Reproduction—excellent.

Un Monsieur. Edith Piaf with orchestra accompaniments. 3-10" discs in album. Vox Set 312. \$3.93.

Edith Piaf fans never seem to get enough of this French cabaret artist's unique songs that one must understand the French idioms perfectly to appreciate fully. The present album issued under the title "Un Monsieur" contains six more of them. These discs were pressed in this country from French Polydor masters.

Speaks: On the Road to Mandalay. One side, and **Sanderman: Until.** Leonard Warren (baritone) accompanied by Willard Sektberg (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1447). \$1.

Two popular ballads by Leonard Warren of the Metropolitan—they are beautifully sung and splendidly recorded. Perhaps Mr. Warren is a bit too dramatic at the close of *Until*—otherwise nothing but praise.

Favorites from The Firestone Hour. Eleanor Steber (soprano) with Russ Case and his Orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-1243. \$5.

Miss Steber's radio audiences number in the millions and many of her admirers will doubtless wel-

come the opportunity of securing this album which contains eight songs she has often sung over the air. They have all been splendidly recorded. They are: *If I Could Tell You*; *Smilin' Through*; *Love's Old Sweet Song*; *Think On Me*; *Danny Boy*; *Songs My Mother Taught Me*; *In the Gloaming*; and *In My Garden*.

Malotte: The Lord's Prayer. One side, and **Danny Boy** (Trad.—arr. Weatherly). Leonard Warren (baritone) accompanied by Willard Sektberg (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1421). \$1.

The popular baritone, Leonard Warren, offers highly satisfactory renditions of these favorites. They have been nicely recorded.



PIANO

Brahms: Variations on a Theme of Paganini, Op. 35. (Book II). Moura Lympany (piano). 1-12" disc (V-C-3697). \$2.

Liszt: Années de Pèlerinage—Les Jeux d'eaux à la Villa d'Este. Moura Lympany (piano). 1-12" disc (V-C-3721). \$2.

It would seem that the very brilliant pianist, Moura Lympany, after making a number of excellent recordings for English Decca, has switched to H.M.V., and the two records listed above are the first that she has made under her new contract.

Of particular importance is the exquisite Liszt selection, which is not presently listed in any domestic catalog. Brahms' *Variations on a Theme of Paganini, Op. 35* has been recorded in complete form by Egon Petri for Columbia and by Jacob Gimpel for Vox. Miss Lympany plays only the variations contained in Book II.

Miss Lympany is an artist of great talent, and we especially call the attention of music lovers on this side of the Atlantic to her superb recording of *Les Jeux d'eaux à la Villa d'Este*.

The piano reproduction on both discs is well up to the high standard set by the English recorders.

Rachmaninoff: Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Op. 43. Artur Rubinstein (piano) and The Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Susskind. 3-12" discs in album (V-DB-9188 to V-DB-9190) (automatic sequence). \$7.88.

Rachmaninoff composed this work during the summer of 1934, while on vacation in Switzerland, and it was promptly given its first performance at a concert of the Philadelphia Orchestra directed by Stokowski with the composer at the piano in Baltimore on November 7, 1934. Less than six months after its initial performance, Victor released its famous recording of it with the same combination of artists. This recorded version enjoyed wide popularity and

has had reasonable sales right down to the present, although a modern recording of it was made by Moisevitch and the London Philharmonic conducted by Basil Cameron in 1942. And now we have this spectacular recording by Rubinstein—we say spectacular because we don't know when we have heard such lifelike reproduction. It would seem that H.M.V., spurred on by the acclaim given to English Decca's *fff* reproduction, has improved its recording technique; it would seem that *fff* has at least been equalled—perhaps bettered by a shadow. With a good phonograph and these discs, one has a concert grand piano right in his living room—and he doesn't have to use his imagination much, either. To us this recording was startling. We suggest that those persons who are particularly interested in the development of the recording art listen to these discs on a high fidelity reproducing instrument.

In addition to superb reproduction, this album contains some fine music, for Rubinstein gives a brilliant performance and is ably supported by a very good British orchestra under the able conductor, Walter Susskind. R.

Prokofiev: Toccata, Op. 10. One side, and **Debussy: The Children's Corner—Serenade for the Doll**, and **Poulenc: Presto.** Vladimir Horowitz (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0428). \$1.25.

Horowitz: Variations on Themes from Bizet's "Carmen." One side, and **Chopin: Mazurka in F minor, Op. 7, No. 3.** Vladimir Horowitz (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0427). \$1.25.

Schumann: Kinderscenen, Op. 15, No. 7—Träumerei. One side, and **Mozart: Sonata No. 11 in A, K. 331—Rondo alla Turca** (3rd movement). Vladimir Horowitz (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0429). \$1.25.

Horowitz is a popular artist and his recordings enjoy substantial sales but we see no particular reason for issuing three single records of his in one month. Why not one each month or one every other month? We presume that these discs would have been issued in an album if someone could have thought of an appropriate title for the collection; the only title we can think of is "From Mozart to Poulenc and Way Stations," and while that might be appropriate, it is certainly not very good.

These discs certainly show Horowitz's great versatility, and we feel that all of his performances are highly satisfactory. The selections are all acceptable and interesting, with the possible exception of the "Carmen Variations"—we just couldn't go for that one.

Sarasate: Zigeunerweisen, Op. 20, No. 1. First Piano Quartet. 1-12" disc (V-12-0425). \$1.25.

This gay Gypsy number is a natural for the talented First Piano Quartet and these fine pianists

give it a stirring performance. RCA Victor has provided a most faithful recording.

Music for Two Pianos. José and Amparo Iturbi (duo-pianists). 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1246. \$4.75.

It has been a number of years since this brother and sister team appeared on records so the present album will very likely be greeted with considerable interest. The music it contains is largely amusing rather than of any lasting value. The first two *Andalusian Dances* from Manuel Infanta's *Trois danses andalouses* are brilliant pieces that should bring any audience to life but are not the sort of selections that one would want to hear very often; one should have no difficulty in thoroughly grasping them at the first hearing. José Iturbi and George Stoll's arrangement of *Three Blind Mice* (a. Waltz Version and b. Boogie Version); J. Clarence Chambers's suite entitled "All American," consisting of *Chicken in the Hay*, *Lush*, *Bloozey Woozey*, and *Parade of the Visiting Firemen*—both of the foregoing are reasonably clever and reasonably amusing, but when you have said that you have pretty well covered the subject.

The piano reproduction is thoroughly satisfactory throughout.

VIOLIN



Kroll: Banjo and Fiddle. One side, and **Korngold: Much Ado About Nothing**—Garden Scene. Jascha Heifetz (violin) accompanied by Emanuel Bay (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0430). \$1.25. Also available in vinylite (V-18-1068), \$2.

Several years ago violinist Jascha Heifetz introduced a composition entitled "Banjo and Fiddle," by the contemporary American composer-violinist William Kroll, at one of his Carnegie Hall recitals. Audience response was so enthusiastic to this latest Heifetz *tour de force* that he had to play the work again before his listeners would let him continue. Since that time *Banjo and Fiddle* has become a regular encore piece on the violinist's programs, and has become identified as a Heifetz specialty in much the same manner as his breathtaking performance of *Hora Staccato*.

William Kroll is known to American music lovers through his compositions for string quartet, piano and violin. *Banjo and Fiddle*, one of his more recent works, is music in a folk vein and full of humor. Its lively rhythms and colorful melodies are set forth by Heifetz with dazzling precision, ingratiating charm and characteristic sensitivity to every tonal nuance.

On the reverse side of this disc will be found the charming *Garden Scene* from Korngold's incidental music to "Much Ado About Nothing," a very ap-

propriate double. Emanuel Bay's highly artistic accompaniments are worthy of especial mention.

Brahms: Sonata No. 3 in D minor, Op. 108. Mischa Elman (violin) accompanied by Wolfgang Rosé (piano). 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1232. \$4.75.

A few months ago, Columbia released a recording of this work by Isaac Stern (violin) and Alexander Zakin (piano). It received wide acclaim by both critics and the music loving public. Now RCA Victor offers its version by Elman and Rosé. We suppose that each recording will have its champions. We can see little to choose between them; and as both albums should be readily available for comparison, we are going to leave it up to the personal choice of our readers without any hint from us.

It has been said that this work holds little for the casual listener—that it is difficult to listen to. It is hard to place any credit in this statement after listening to the superb recorded performances mentioned above. We are not too profound in the field of chamber music but we had no trouble in getting real enjoyment from this work. If you are not familiar with this composition, we urge you at least to give it a hearing.

HARPSICHORD



Bach: Das Wohltemperirte Clavier—Preludes and Fugues X to XII. Dorothy Lane (harpsichord). 2-10" discs in album. Concord Set D-7, Vol. 3. \$3.68.

The first two volumes of this series were reviewed in our July 1948 issue. They contained the Preludes and Fugues I to IX inclusive and in the present volume are Nos. X to XII. The first volumes met with considerable favor and those who purchased them will doubtless be glad to know that the third is now available. Most music lovers seemed to feel that Miss Lane gave performances that were highly satisfactory. The reproduction of the harpsichord is excellent and the surfaces very quiet.

DICTION



Jeffers: Medea. Judith Anderson with supporting cast. 4-12" discs in album. Decca Set DAU-12. \$10.50.

Decca has done for the spoken drama what other companies have done for grand opera and has in its catalog a long and brilliant list of dramatic recordings: *Alice in Wonderland* with Ginger Rogers; *The Cask of Amontillado* with Sydney Greenstreet; *The Count of Monte Cristo* with Herbert Marshall; *Lost Horizon* with Ronald Colman; *Treasure Island* with Thomas Mitchell—to mention only a few of this

company's outstanding accomplishments in this field.

And now we have the great dramatic success of last season, *Medea*, with Judith Anderson in the title role—a performance that brought rave notices from all of the critics. The present recording covers most of the important scenes, and in it Miss Anderson has the support of an adequate cast including Arnold Moss, who will be especially remembered for his fine performance of Prospero in a recent revival of *The Tempest*. Mr. Moss plays the important part of Jason in this outstanding recording.

Certainly Decca has gone all out in offering a recording of Greek tragedy to the general record buying public. We wonder if there are enough persons interested in such an album to make it commercially profitable. We hope so, but we rather doubt it. We doubt whether the play itself would be successful except in a few of the largest cities. However, the album has been made and is available for those who are interested, and all we can do is hope that it will have a reasonable sale. The whole thing has been most artistically accomplished and is worthy of the highest praise. The discs are unbreakable and have absolutely silent surfaces.



CHILDREN

Sinbad the Sailor. Basil Rathbone with supporting cast and orchestra conducted by Ralph Rose. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-767. \$4.75.

The popular stage and screen star, Basil Rathbone, adds another to his famous series of recordings for children which already includes *Treasure Island*, *Peter and the Wolf*, and *Robin Hood*. This time he has chosen the fabulous story of *Sinbad the Sailor* from "The Arabian Nights." With a fine cast of supporting players and music from Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*, he brings this old tale very much to life. It should delight the children—and some of us oldsters too—with its nostalgic charm.

Foster: Prince Valiant and the Outlaws. (Adapted by R. S. Fishel.) Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., with supporting cast; orchestra conducted by Leo Arnaud. 2-12" discs in folder. RCA Victor Set Y-611. \$3.75.

For those children who have been following him in the newspapers, Prince Valiant and his band of followers come to life on these records. Each episode of the story is nicely pictured on the inside of the folder that contains these discs. Here is a story of adventure "in the days of King Arthur," nicely told by an adequate cast and always in the best of taste.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$9.75.

The Concert Companion. By Robert Bagar and Louis Biancolli with an introduction by Deems Taylor. xi + 868 pp. Whittlesey House (New York). Price \$7.50.

The Art of Judging Music. By Virgil Thomson. x + 318 + xviii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$4.25.

The Record Book (International Edition). By David Hall. xii + 1394 pp. Oliver Durrell, Inc. (New York). Price \$7.50.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

A Dictionary of Musical Themes. Compiled by Harold Barlow and Sam Morgenstern with an introduction by John Erskine. xiii + 656 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Biblotone, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CE—Cetra, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CT—Concertone, D—Decca, DI—Disco, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, HU—Harvard Film Service, HW—Hargail, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, L—London Gramophone, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, OK—Okeh, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, V—Victor, and VX—Vox, W—Woodwind.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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Because of the vast number of new releases that have been received in the last few weeks, we will omit the book reviews and the editorial matter that is usually found in this place and get at the primary task of this little publication, namely, the reviewing of new recordings.

* * *

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues published during the last sixteen years are available. The price is 5c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 125 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

ORCHESTRA

Brahms: Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. 6-12" discs in album (V-DBS-9220 and V-DB-9221 to V-DB-9225) (automatic sequence). \$14.44.

Furtwängler's reading of the *First* is monumental. As ever, his control of dynamics, his shading, his crescendo, are all incomparable. There is no other conductor today who can equal this uncanny alchemy. The third movement is lovelier than ever in his hands, and there is much delicate magic in the second, too. There are some *rubati* that are not always encountered, but who can serve them so superbly and subtly as Furtwängler? For all the fine-grained shading, there is no lack of power and drama in the end movements. The first movement has an impressive strength, the final movement has breadth and eloquence. The whole work has symmetry—is convincing every minute of the way. This is certainly the performance to hear often, remember, and cherish. The Vienna Philharmonic on these discs is not quite the heavenly-toned aggregation of pre-war Vienna, but it is an imposing ensemble which reflects Furtwängler's orchestral technique magnificently.

A comparison of the present set with other available versions of the Brahms *First* is futile. Some of these recordings have received generous praise in these columns and they still deserve respect. Beside

Furtwängler's towering masterpiece, they become "other versions." Rodzinski, Toscanini, and Stokowski, in the order named, are worth serious consideration for those not disposed to acquiring Furtwängler. If price is no object, the imported set is a must. The surfaces are, as always, smooth and quiet, and the reproduction is resplendent, with luxurious sonority and fine definition (quiet passages, woodwinds, etc.).

As for the music, with which everyone by now is quite familiar, we can only say Brahms *First*, which is for many his greatest, is worthy of the very best; this it receives on these records. S.

Mozart: Symphony No. 33 in B flat, K. 319. Five sides, and Mozart: **The Marriage of Figaro—Overture.** Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-778. \$4.75.

Another worthy addition to the catalogs is here offered; it is the only domestic version of the 33rd available since Victor deleted the Fischer set (DM-479), which was on the prosaic side, anyhow. English Decca lists one which we have not heard. Von Karajan probes deeply and presents a serious study of Mozart; some have termed his Mozart heavy-handed. We feel he gets beneath the surface of things and provides a solid structure with some real meaning. He certainly goes farther than just tossing off the Mozartian phrases gracefully. We should like to hear him do one of the later symphonies, for the 33rd is an approach to these last several (and greatest) Mozart symphonies.

The 33rd is scored only for oboes, horns, and bassoons in addition to strings, and originally consisted solely of three movements, the Minuet (third movement) being added when it was revived for Viennese audiences several years after composition. It may not have the immediate appeal of some of the other symphonies, but it is obviously an easily written and spirited work. The lovely phrases are unmistakably Mozart and, to us, unflinchingly attractive. That they could be written while Mozart was in a troubled state is remarkable; today we would be awarded with a cacophonous diatribe baring the composer's anguished soul over the state of the world and his own troubles. But then, Mozart gave the world something to remember for a long time.

The final side provides a nice encore with the

familiar overture to *The Marriage of Figaro*. Von Karajan does not quite equal Beecham's inimitable reading, yet his treatment is valid. Reproduction of this set is very fine; our surfaces, good. S.

Rimsky-Korsakoff: Sadko (Symphonic Poem). Three sides, and **Rimsky-Korsakoff: Le Coq d'Or**—Introduction. San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1252. \$3.50.

The present tone poem was composed in 1867 and was re-orchestrated in 1891. The subject matter so impressed Rimsky-Korsakoff that he based his opera of the same name upon it. The opera *Sadko* appeared in 1896.

Sadko was a wandering minstrel who came to the shore of Lake Ilmen. There his singing charmed the daughter of the Sea King. He was royally entertained by his majesty and eventually married the princess. He desired to return to his home but on the way his bride was miraculously changed into a river upon which Sadko's ship returned.

The present work is in three sections: an introduction; Sadko's entertainment by the Sea King; and his eventual return to his homeland. It is rather thrilling music, and as presented by that master of the orchestra, Pierre Monteux, it is an item that is worthy of the attention of all music lovers. Just in passing, we might remark that Monteux is yet to make a recording that was not well worth investigation; he rates with Beecham in that regard.

The San Francisco Symphony has been superbly recorded by RCA Victor. This album may be considered as an outstanding example of domestic reproduction at its best.

Britten: Peter Grimes, Op. 33a—Four Sea Interludes. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-303. \$3.50.

Last June we reviewed the English Decca album (EDA-50), which contained the *Four Sea Interludes*, and in addition the *Passacaglia* from Britten's successful opera, "Peter Grimes." The Decca recording was made by the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam under the direction of Eduard van Beinum. It received a glowing review and was well received by most music lovers. Except for the price, which is considerably higher than the present version, it has everything in its favor. Perhaps, if we had not heard the earlier recording, we would be entirely satisfied with the one just released by Columbia; but we have heard it, and so have many other persons interested in records. Thus we must state the case as we find it.

When "Peter Grimes" was given by the Metropolitan last season, music lovers were practically unanimous in their praise of the orchestral interludes that connected the several scenes; thus, if you are not familiar with this music, it will be well worth your

while to investigate either or both of the albums mentioned in this review.

Smetana: Wallenstein's Camp, Op. 14. Czech Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Rafael Kubelik. 2-12" discs in album. Mercury Set DM-11. \$3.92.

In this case we have a brilliant and thrilling performance of one of Smetana's finest works for orchestra. The Czech Philharmonic is a great organization and under the distinguished direction of Rafael Kubelik, the son of the world-renowned violinist, Jan Kubelik, presents a performance that is well worth the attention of all music lovers. We wish that we could say that the reproduction rates with the quality of the playing; however, it is passable, and we believe that many persons will overlook it in order to obtain the superb performance of a fine work that is seldom heard in this country.

Wallenstein's Camp is the second, and by far the best and most original, of the three symphonic poems that Smetana wrote during his stay at Göteborg. The other two are *Richard III* and *Hakon Jarl*. For those who are interested, David Hall has written a very detailed account of the present work; his excellent notes will be found on the inside cover of the album that contains these discs.

Delibes: Coppelia (Excerpts). Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, conducted by Constant Lambert. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-775. \$6.

Tchaikovsky: The Sleeping Beauty, Op. 66 (Excerpts). Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, conducted by Constant Lambert. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-302. \$3.50.

Those who are fond of ballet music will probably be delighted to know that these English recordings are now generally available in this country. This will be especially true of the rather full recording of *Coppelia* containing more sections of the ballet than any other single album. A finer and much more representative recording of *The Sleeping Beauty* was released by RCA Victor last May (DM-1205), recorded by Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra.

Constant Lambert has a flair for the ballet, which is clearly discernible in the two recordings listed above. The reproduction in both cases is top rank.

Berwald: Estrella di Soria—Overture. Stockholm Royal Opera Orchestra conducted by Sten Frykberg. 1-12" disc (V-Z-310). \$2.

Franz Adolf Berwald (1796-1868), a Swedish composer of some note, is practically unknown in this country. He was an associate of Mendelssohn during his (Berwald's) student days in Berlin and wrote considerable music for the famous Swedish singer, Jenny Lind. The present rather attractive

selection is the overture to one of his two successful operas. Musically it is not of great importance but it is interesting and pleasing to listen to.

This disc has two features to recommend it: it will introduce to music lovers in this country an example of Berwald's work, and it will give them an opportunity of securing a recording of the Stockholm Royal Opera Orchestra.

Tchaikovsky: Overture Solennelle "1812," Op. 49. Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by Willem Mengelberg. 2-12" discs in album. Mercury Set DM-23. \$3.92.

There are several better recordings of this old war horse from a technical point of view and we can see no particular reason for Mercury's re-pressing this selection from the Czechoslovak masters. Perhaps it is thought that music lovers will want a recording of it by Mengelberg and the Concertgebouw Orchestra; perhaps there are a few, but we doubt whether there are enough to make this a successful commercial venture.

American Music for Orchestra. Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-608. \$6.

Chadwick: Jubilee, No. 1 (from "Symphonic Sketches Suite").

MacDowell: Dirge, Op. 48 (from "Suite No. 2").

Paine: Oedipus Tyrannus, Op. 35—Prelude.

Kennan: Night Soliloquy.

Griffes: The White Peacock.

The album listed above was released by RCA Victor in November, 1939, and later was dropped from the catalog. The present increasing demand for examples of American orchestral music on records probably caused it to be re-instated. It is now available at your record dealer's, and those collectors who have been wishing for a copy of it may now easily satisfy their desire.

A Wandering Minstrel I. Richard Crean and His Orchestra. 3-10" discs in album. London Set LA-3. \$3.15.

Blue Danube. Ronnie Munro and His Orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. London Set LA-2. \$3.94.

These albums, which just arrived from abroad, will introduce to American audiences two of England's outstanding musicians in the field of light music—Richard Crean and Ronnie Munro. They will also indicate the excellence of English records in the lower price class—"full range" reproduction and surfaces as smooth as glass.

The Richard Crean album contains orchestral selections from *The Mikado*; *The Yeomen of the Guard*; and *The Gondoliers*. The Ronnie Munro album con-

tains the following Strauss waltzes: *Tales From the Vienna Woods*; *Die Fledermaus*; *Emperor*; *Voices of Spring*; *Blue Danube*; *Artist's Life*; *Roses From the South* and *Wine, Women and Song*.

In these two charming albums, we have dinner music *par excellence*, played with rare refinement and recorded in a most lifelike manner. Gilbert and Sullivan fans will be particularly interested in the Richard Crean album.

Haydn: Symphony No. 94 in G major ("Surprise"). Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-781. \$4.75.

This version of Haydn's "Surprise" Symphony will immediately be compared with Koussevitzky's recording by the Boston Symphony, which was released by RCA Victor less than a year ago. In the vast majority of cases it is probable that the Boston version will get the nod. The only reason that we can see for re-pressing the Liverpool recording in this country is that Columbia needed a modern version of this popular symphony in its catalog.

Rimsky-Korsakoff: Scheherazade. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-772. \$7.25.

What can a reviewer say that is new about another recording of *Scheherazade*? Frankly, we don't know, so we will just quote what Columbia said in announcing this new album.

"Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra give the work a dramatic and full flavored performance, in which the splendid sonorities of the ensemble are given full play."

Weber: Jubel-Ouverture, E major, Op. 59. The Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (C-12891D). \$1.25.

This joyful selection has been missing from the domestic catalogs for many years, and so this fine spirited rendition by the Minneapolis Symphony under Mitropoulos is particularly welcome. It is not music of much importance, but it is pleasant to listen to and is thus recommended. Reproduction—good.

CONCERTO



Mozart: Concerto No. 7 in F for Three Pianos, K. 242. Rosina Lhevinne, Vronsky and Babin, with The Little Orchestra Society conducted by Thomas K. Scherman. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-771. \$4.75.

With the first recording ever made of the *Three Piano Concerto*, something new is added to the formidable list of Mozart recordings. There are many who have never heard a performance of this work,

including a majority of serious collectors and lovers of Mozart. This, then, is an event. As is so often the case, it remains for the smaller and more enterprising organizations to unearth and present seldom heard but worth-while music. Mr. Scherman is offering New York some fine concerts, and some highlights were fortunately recorded before the ban.

Mozart wrote the *Three Piano Concerto* for the Countess Antonia Lodron and her two daughters, his pupils. There is no record of a public performance by these ladies, but the premiere took place in October, 1777, in Augsburg when Mozart himself played the second piano part, an organist of Augsburg the first, and a piano manufacturer the third. It was composed in 1776, just after his twentieth birthday.

The concerto is in three movements: an opening *Allegro*, a lovely *Adagio* of seventy-three bars, and a final *Rondeau* (tempo di Menuetto). The concerto is thoroughly enjoyable and is considered one of the three or four best of Mozart's earlier period. The performance on these records is sympathetic and well integrated, pianists playing together beautifully and orchestral part well executed and adjusted to the soloists. Rosina Lhevinne joins the Babins admirably, for she gave numerous two-piano recitals with her husband, the late Josef Lhevinne, and is familiar with two-piano technique. A fine job by all concerned, and worth anyone's careful consideration. Reproduction is well balanced and bright; surfaces of our set good. S.

Chopin: Concerto No. 2 in F minor, Op. 21. Malcuzyński (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Paul Kletski. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-776. \$6.

Liszt: Concerto No. 2 in A. Malcuzyński (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Susskind. Five sides, and **Chopin: Etude No. 19 in C sharp minor, Op. 25, No. 7.** Malcuzyński (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-777. \$4.75.

Rachmaninoff: Concerto No. 2 in C minor. Op. 18. Cyril Smith (piano) with the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-774. \$7.25.

With this trio of second concertos, which are part of a special release of European recordings, Columbia provides an abundance of interesting material. As many persons are probably not too familiar with Malcuzyński, we should like to mention that he is a fine artist. He is one of the few pupils of Paderewski. A youthful Pole, he is widely known in Europe and has made concert tours in America. This is his debut on American records, although he has many records in the overseas catalogs. We will undoubtedly be hearing much of this great artist as time rolls on.

Malcuzyński's performance of Chopin is outstand-

ing. There seems to be a complete understanding of the work and its content, with no attempt to bolster its weaknesses, but merely to expose its gentle sweetness in a plain and unembarrassed manner. Nicely played and splendidly reproduced, it bears comparison with any other version of the work, and will find preference with a majority of buyers.

Malcuzyński's rendition of the Liszt *Second* is quite a contrast to his Chopin, for here he performs with impressive bravura, big tone, and befitting elegance. The reproduction, too, is big and clangorous, and fits the concerto like a glove. There is good detail in the piano playing; Susskind is well in the spirit of things, also. Columbia competes with itself, for its Petri set was a beauty.

It is, unfortunately, impossible to dissociate Rachmaninoff's own recording of the *Second* from other versions. Old as his set is (Vic. DM-58), it is still well-nigh impossible to beat. For those who wish better reproduction, Cyril Smith's set is worth a hearing. It is better than Columbia's Sandor set by a great deal; it equals the Rubinstein set in many respects and surpasses it easily in orchestral support. Sargent and Smith do a most creditable job with this favorite. S.

Beethoven: Concerto in D, Op. 61. Yehudi Menuhin (violin) and the Lucerne Festival Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. 6-12" discs (11 sides) in album (V-DBS-9198 and V-DB-9199 to V-DB-9203) (automatic sequence). \$14.44.

One notices in the English magazines recently a number of releases by Furtwängler on His Master's Voice and Decca. He has appeared in England, and this reviewer wishes we could have him over here for some concerts with something less than the naive snipings that accompanied Flagstad recently. He is, in our opinion, one of the half dozen greatest living conductors, and judging from the popularity of his several domestically pressed Victor recordings we do not stand alone in that opinion. We hope soon to review his Brahms First and Second Symphonies.

Such carefully shaped phrases as one finds in Furtwängler's conducting of the orchestral portion of the Beethoven *Violin Concerto* would be hard to match. The graduations of tone are beautifully subtle, and one recalls his shadings have always been unique. However, with all the care lavished on this performance it does not seem mechanical or studied; the music breathes nicely and glows with a warm poise. The Lucerne Orchestra appears to be a competent group on these records, although they are not distinguished by any individual type of beauty.

Menuhin's reading of the violin part is an unhurried and rather musicianly affair, extremely well toned but not too burning with inspiration. He seems to get warmed up about side three and pours more spirit into the thing. We do not prefer his reading

to Szigeti's (Col. MM-697), whose set is a much sounder investment economically, as well as being a superb performance.

The reproduction of the present set is good in every sense of the word, yielding a pleasing and satisfying tone, having clarity and richness. For those wishing to indulge themselves, this set will provide some fine-grained entertainment, with the accent on beauty of tone and texture. S.

Pergolesi: Concerto for Flute in G major. Three sides, and Bach—arr. Hinnenthal: Sarabande (from Suite in A minor). Gustavo Sheck (flute) with chamber orchestra. 2-12" discs (V-S-10494 and V-S-10495, manual sequence). \$3.99.

During his short life, Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710-1736) produced an immense number of compositions. He is particularly remembered for his comic opera *Le Serva Padrona* and for his *Stabat Mater*. Much of his output was little better than commonplace but as some of his sacred works were well received and several of his comic operas were distinct hits, he has some claim to fame.

The present work, one of the few of his instrumental compositions, is pleasing in its tunefulness and its simplicity, and is of historical value rather than of any great musical merit. It will fit nicely in a collection of 18th century Italian music and these discs are recommended with that thought in mind.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Mozart: Serenade in B flat, K. 361 (for thirteen wind instruments). Wind soloists of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. 5-12" discs in album (V-DB-9226 to V-DB-9230) (automatic sequence). \$13.13.

This marks the first satisfactory recording of the *Serenade, K. 361*. The most nearly satisfactory set previously recorded was by Fischer and his Chamber Orchestra (Vic. DM-743) which omitted a couple of movements. Furtwängler and the Vienna Philharmonic artists provide a thoughtful and beautifully phrased performance, which is recorded extremely well. We doubt that the individual merits of some of these artists compare to the members of our best domestic orchestras, such as Philadelphia, Boston, NBC, etc.; but the group as a whole plays with nice rapport. There are, of course, many instances of virtuosity, fine shading, and real artistry.

The *Serenade* is of the long variety, with numerous movements. First is a well developed first movement, introduction and all, very symphonic in style; then a Minuet with two trios; next an Adagio; another Minuet with two trios; a *Romanze* (Adagio, Allegretto, Adagio); a theme with six variations; and a final Rondo. There seems to be no especial connection between all these movements—one could easily

play a few, or enjoy a pause between various parts. It is scored for oboes, clarinets, basset horns, and bassoons in pairs, four horns, and a double bassoon (or double bass), achieving good balance between families of single reed, double reed, and brass. The double bassoon is used here, not string bass. The music has remarkable variety and contrast within its boundaries, the wind instruments being highly capable of portraying Mozart's unique style. For the man who can relax and enjoy unpretentious chamber music, a Mozart serenade is a tonic. It restores your serenity and warms your heart. S.

Mozart: Divertimento No. 11 in D major, K. 251. Dumbarton Oaks Chamber Orchestra conducted by Alexander Schneider. 3-12" discs in album. Mercury Set DM-4. \$5.23.

This lively work, which Mozart wrote to ridicule the French musical style of his day, is rare fun to listen to and really quite exciting. It is in six short movements and is scored for two violins, viola, violoncello, oboe and two horns. Polydore made a recording of this attractive music many years ago but copies of that version are no longer available. Thus this excellent performance by the Dumbarton Oaks Chamber Orchestra, under the brilliant direction of that very able musician, Alexander Schneider, is particularly welcome. The reproduction has been most successfully accomplished.

With this album one will find very full and highly interesting notes supplied by Edward Tatnall Canby.

Mozart: Quartet No. 14 in G major, K. 387. The Griller String Quartet. 4-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-48. \$9.45.

About ten years ago the Roth String Quartet made a fine recording of this work for Columbia and it has enjoyed steady popularity through the years. This modern recording will probably take its place, although we would not say that, as a performance, it is superior to that of the Roth's. If you have the older version in your library, it is doubtful whether you will think that the modern recording is sufficiently better to warrant making the change.

The present work is full of charm and is the first of a series of six which Mozart dedicated to Haydn, to whom he felt indebted for his knowledge of the quartet form.

Beethoven: Quartet No. 16 in F, Op. 135. The Paganini Quartet. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1253. \$4.75.

Last month in reviewing the Loewenguth Quartet recording of this work, we stated that we were still waiting for an entirely satisfactory recording of it, both as to performance and reproduction. We stated that the early Budapest Quartet version, while beautifully played, was poorly recorded; and that in the Loewenguth recording, while the reproduction was

good, the players seemed to miss many important points in the music.

In the present version, the Paganini players give a superior performance to the Loewenguth group, but they are not the Budapest Quartet—they just don't have the finish and finesse of that outstanding organization. Perhaps our readers are pretty much confused at this point—briefly the present recording by the Paganini Quartet, taking in consideration the playing and the reproduction, is the best available. It is, however, not the last word; a better recording of this lovely music can well be imagined.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 1 in D major, Op. 12, No. 1. Four sides, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 2 in A major, Op. 12, No. 2.** Jascha Heifetz (violin) and Emanuel Bay (piano). 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1254. \$6.

This album contains the initial domestic recordings of the first two of the ten sonatas which Beethoven wrote for violin and piano. Fritz Kreisler and Franz Rupp recorded them all for H. M. V. and they were issued as limited editions (Beethoven Violin Sonata Society, Vols. I to IV). Can it be that Heifetz and Bay propose to record them all, too? This fine pair of artists did record *No. 3, E flat major, Op. 12, No. 3* a number of years ago (Vic. DM-852).

The present album is a valuable addition to the recorded repertory, for it makes generally available two very pleasing and quite important Beethoven works. There may be those who will prefer the Kreisler renditions (perhaps for sentimental reasons) but there is no question about the excellent musicianship of Heifetz and Bay. They are well qualified for the task at hand and they turn in superb performances.

CHORAL



Berlioz: Requiem. George Jouatte (tenor) and the Emile Passani Choir and Orchestra conducted by Jean Fournet. 11-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-769. \$15.50.

Here is musical history in the making, for only second in importance to the original performance of this extraordinary work in the chapel of the Invalides in Paris, during December, 1837, is this first completely recorded performance, made during the late war in the church of Saint Eustache, Paris.

No wonder that performances of the Berlioz *Requiem* are so scarce, when one considers that to give this superbly original and almost legendary work, one must have a chorus of 300 voices, a tenor soloist, an orchestra and 50 brass instruments, sixteen tympani and four sets of cymbals—the equivalent of four brass bands!

Apparently the forces called for by the composer were faithfully gathered in wartime Paris for this altogether grandiose recording. The great Emile Pas-

sani Choir, an orchestra and four brass bands under the direction of Jean Fournet, were assembled to give an authentic and definitive performance which may well stand as a monument to the strange and overwhelming genius of Berlioz.

Pages could be written about this remarkable work, which is a vast composition of infinite variety and invention. Many consider this Berlioz' greatest work and in listening to these records, one comes to feel that such a contention is in no way an exaggeration. It is known that Berlioz himself once wrote in retrospective mood, "If I were threatened with the destruction of the whole of my works save one, I would crave mercy for the *Requiem*."

The *Requiem*, from its affecting opening on the middle strings, followed by the brass, to its final funeral drumbeats is an extraordinary piece of workmanship. The music alternates from grave and profound to thrilling and theatrical. The majesty of the *Rex Tremendae* and the quiet, soprano-dominated *Quaerens Me* are but one of many examples of contrast. The famous entrance of the brass choirs in the *Tuba mirum* is something tremendous. Berlioz himself said of this passage that its "grandeur was terrible."

The *Lachrymosa* section is very original in the orchestral writing, and it builds up to an enormously affecting climax.

The recording, repressed from excellent French Columbia masters, is a matter for unreserved rejoicing. Like the Cetra recording of the Mozart *Requiem*, the present set gives one the sense of an event of the first magnitude, and the feeling of vast unconstructed forces is always apparent.

George Jouatte, one of the greatest vocal stylists in Europe today and a valued member of the Paris Opera, has been entrusted with the lovely tenor solo of the *Sanctus*. Mr. Jouatte encompasses the high *tessitura* with superb results.

And so, we who collect records can now add to the *Requiem*s of Mozart, Fauré, Brahms and Verdi this altogether breathtaking one by that strange and uncomprehended genius—Hector Berlioz.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Merry Christmas Music. The Saintsbury Singers conducted by Clarence Snyder. 3-10" discs in album. Bibletone Set MC. \$3.09.

Christmas Carols. The National Vespers Mixed Choir. 3-10" discs in album. Bibletone Set CV. \$3.09.

Bibletone offers two albums appropriate for the Christmas Season. Both choirs are composed of mixed voices and render these selections in a highly satisfactory manner. The Saintsbury Singers are unaccompanied and the National Vespers Choir is supported by an adequate organ. The reproduction, while

not of the best, is good. Each album contains a booklet giving the text of the carols.

The "Merry Christmas Music" album contains fifteen short carols, some of them quite unusual, and all of them interesting. If you would like some recorded music for Christmas that is different from the usual run, we suggest that you investigate this album. It contains: *God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen; Bring a Torch; Good Christian Men, Rejoice; Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming; Angels O'er the Fields; Boar's Head Carol; Deck the Halls; The Holly and the Ivy; Coventry Carol; When Christ Was Born; Break Forth, O Beauteous; O Come, O Come, Emmanuel; Shepherds! Shake Off Your Sleep; I Saw Three Ships Come Sailing In; and The Wassail Song.*

The "Christmas Carols" album contains: *Adeste Fidelis; It Came Upon a Midnight Clear; Silent Night; O Little Town of Bethlehem; Hark, the Herald Angels Sing; and Joy to the World.*

Madrigals. (Edited by E. H. Fellows). Cambridge University Madrigal Society, conducted by Boris Ord. 6-12" discs in album (V-C-3745 to V-C-3750). \$11.97.

If space were available, a whole article could be written about these unique recordings, but because of the vast number of records that have been received for review during the last few weeks, we must give the bare facts about them and trust that those music lovers who are interested will investigate them for themselves.

These recordings of some sixteen madrigals of "Merrie England" were made under the auspices of the British Council. Six of them are choral recordings and ten of them are allotted to soloists—one voice to a part. Among the soloists are the very able and well-known Isobel Baillie, Margaret Field-Hyde and Keith Falkner.

On the whole, we would say that this venture on the part of the British Council has been quite successfully accomplished, and we do not hesitate to recommend these discs to those persons who are interested in music of this character.

Palestine Dances. Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Max Goberman. 3-10" discs in album. Vox Set No. 191. \$3.75.

Jewish Holiday Dances. Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Max Goberman. 3-10" discs in album. Vox Set No. 192. \$3.75.

Corinne Chochem, the distinguished dancer and dance instructor, is largely responsible for these two unique albums. She has done much research in the field of Jewish folk music and has enlisted the aid of a number of important composers in making it available to the present generation. Such eminent musicians as Darius Milhaud, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Ernst Toch and Hans Eisler have taken the

material that Miss Chochem has gathered together and from it have prepared original compositions in the style and form of the age-old melodies. The present sets of discs contain a number of these compositions. On the back cover of each album Miss Chochem has selected several of the dances and has outlined in detail just how they are to be performed.

The chorus and orchestra under the direction of Max Goberman presents them very nicely on these records. The reproduction is satisfactory but the record surfaces are none too smooth.

Music from Palestine (from the film "My Father's House"). Shepherd's flute, Hazamir Children's Chorus, and Hazamir Singers of Palestine. 3-10" discs in album. Disc Set No. 932. \$3.94.

These recordings were made in Palestine by Meyer Levin, one of the producers of the film "My Father's House." All of the selections as recorded appear in the picture. One disc in this set is devoted to songs played on a shepherd's flute by the noted Palestinian troubador, Hillel Rabinowitch. This is a unique record and will be of interest to those persons who collect recordings of unusual instruments. The second disc contains selections by the Hazamir Children's Chorus of Tel Aviv, and the final disc contains selections by the Hazamir Singers of Palestine. The latter is a mixed chorus of a score or possibly more singers.

High Holidays. Cantor Jonah Binder and choir with organ. (Sung in Hebrew). 2-12" discs in album. Disc Set No. 904. \$3.52.

Cantor Binder's earlier album "Sabbath Prayers" met with considerable success when it was issued several months ago. Therefore there is a waiting demand for the present album containing sacred songs and prayers appropriate for the High Holidays. Cantor Binder has the support of an adequate choir and we are sure these renditions will meet with the approval of those who are interested in sacred Hebrew recordings.

The present album contains: *Kaddish; Yaaleh; Kol Nidrei; and Ovinu Malkein.* The recording has been satisfactorily accomplished but the record surfaces of the samples sent us were not as quiet as we would like them.

OPERA

R. Strauss: Elektra (Excerpts). Erna Schluter, Ljuba Welitsch, Paul Schoeffler, Walter Widop, Ernst Erbach and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1247. \$6.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of 1936, under the caption *Elektra*, has this to say: "No avail-

able recordings have been traced, and the 4 HMV acoustic single-sided discs of *Elektra* excerpts have long been out of print." With this knowledge, it is hardly necessary to comment on what a great service Sir Thomas Beecham has done the record world by presenting these fine discs of the finale of one of the most extraordinary musical works of the present century.

When *Elektra* was first given on January 25, 1909, at Dresden, it stirred up the most bitter controversies; in fact, it became a sensation. Schumann-Heink, the Clytemnestra, resigned from the cast after the first performance, fearing that damage would be done to her voice. Strauss is said to have exhorted his conductor at the first rehearsals, crying ". . . Louder, louder the orchestra; I can still hear the voice of Frau Schumann-Heink!" At the first New York performance, Marietta Mazarin fainted after having done what seemed like a superhuman effort—an effort which has resulted in making her an unforgettable American operatic memory.

One supposes that recording companies must have thought *Elektra* was not recordable music; or, at any rate, that such musical fare would not prove popular with those who bought records. *Salomé*, *Rosenkavalier*, *Arabella*, *Ariadne*, *Daphne*, *Die Aegyptische Helena*—all have been more or less represented on records, and are to this day. Only *Elektra*, possibly Strauss' greatest—certainly his most powerful—work, has been totally neglected.

And now the intrepid Sir Thomas comes along, and with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus and a fine cast of soloists, presents the complete tremendous final scene from this one-act opera, beginning with Orestes' return.

The scene is one of the most grisly and at the same time one of the most exalted that one can imagine. The music unerringly conveys these qualities, and the eerie effect Strauss gets in his orchestra during the murder of Clytemnestra (horribly realistic here) is almost unendurable in its phantasmagoric horror.

Pages could be written about this score and its interesting history, but we have hardly that kind of space in these columns. It will suffice to say that Sir Thomas is obviously in a most enthusiastic vein during these recordings; the results are magnificent. Erna Schluter, who made such a sad fiasco with her Isolde at the Metropolitan last year, makes a superb and steely-voiced Elektra on these records. Her great monologue in which she rejoices at the return of Orestes is the work of a great artist.

Paul Schoeffler has the vocal weight for the part of Orestes and is altogether admirable in his long scene with Elektra, which covers five record-sides. It is interesting to hear the clear, vibrant soprano of Ljuba Welitsch as Chrysothemis, for this singer is to appear with the Metropolitan during this approaching

season. Our old friend, Walter Widdop, is a convincing Aegisthus, and minor roles are capably filled.

When all is said and done, it is Sir Thomas and his orchestra that leave the most vivid impressions with you after you have played the album through. The recording, which was accomplished recently in England, is as masterly a job as one has heard in a very long time.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Saint-Saëns: Samson et Dalila, Op. 47 (complete opera). (Sung in French). Hélène Bouvier, José Luccioni, Charles Cambon, Paul Cabanel, Médus, and the Chorus and Orchestre National de l'Opera conducted by Louis Fourestier. 15-12" discs in two albums. Columbia Set MOP-28. \$21.50.

In the days when such singers as Caruso, Homer and Matzenauer flourished at the Metropolitan, performances of *Samson et Delila* were ordinary occurrences; sometimes a performance of this work even had the honor of ushering in the new season at New York. Today this is no longer true.

Therefore, it is with the greatest pleasure that we come across this completely recorded performance of Saint-Saëns' masterpiece, released by Columbia from excellent Pathé originals.

Samson et Dalila is a fine, well put-together score, with unusual drama in its choral and orchestral pages; moments of sensuous, passionate melody, and an exotic ballet. In its exoticism, *Samson* is to French opera what *Aida* is to Italian.

The present recording is a properly spacious one, stressing the grand manner which this music calls for. The artists are all well-known singers in Paris, all of them at present very active in the Grand Opéra. Recording was achieved during the final years of the late war, yet there is no sense of having worked under difficulties, for the results and the actual recording are superb.

Hélène Bouvier, a young contralto who has been singing in Paris all this past summer, has been well selected for the music of Dalila. Mlle. Bouvier has a fresh, strong voice with an unusually well-equalized scale. Her singing is clean and firm, and she successfully suggests the seductive accents of the role. Her voicing of the famous *Mon coeur s'ouvre a ta voix* is as fine as anything you are likely to hear today from a contralto.

Not so happily cast is José Luccioni as Samson. Mr. Luccioni's lyric tenor is hard-driven, and the use of coarse, open tones, in order to attain the requisite volume of this very heroic role, is not pleasant to hear. There is vitality, but it is of a vociferous type, and the tenor never remotely suggests the nobility of the strong man of Gaza.

Superb, indeed, is the singing of Paul Cabanel as the Grand Pretre de Dagon. Immediately with his

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first phrases, *Que vois-je, Abimelech frappé par des esclaves?*, you realize that here is an important singer, an artist molded in the grand style. Amplitude of voice, largeness of accent and utterance, and all the finest traditions of the Paris Opera are to be found in Monsieur Cabanel's impressive singing. His is the outstanding performance of the new *Samson*. Charles Cambon as Abimelech and Médus as the Old Hebrew, are more than competent.

The opening scene with its fine choral and orchestral passages is thoroughly exciting, and Louis Fourstier manages to give a definitive performance throughout.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Gounod: Roméo et Juliette—Valse: Je veux vivre dans ce rêve (Act I). (Sung in French). One side, and **Mozart: Le Nozze di Figaro**, K. 492—Voi che sapete (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Eleanor Steber (soprano) and the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. 1-12" disc (V-12-0526). \$1.25.

Massenet: Hérodiade—Il est doux, il est bon (Act I). One side, and **Massenet: Manon**—Adieu, notre petite table (Act II). (Sung in French). Licia Albanese (soprano) and the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. 1-12" disc (V-12-0525). \$1.25.

Verdi: Il Trovatore—Tacea la notte placida (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Florence Quartararo (soprano) and the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. 1-12" disc (V-12-0530). \$1.25.

Puccini: La Tosca—Mario! Mario! Son qui! Perché chiuso? (Act I). One side, and **Puccini: La Tosca**—La vedi? Ti ama? (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Florence Quartararo (soprano) and Ramon Vinay (tenor) and the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. 1-12" disc (V-12-0531). \$1.25.

A new batch of RCA Victor releases featuring soprano voices, brings forward a new artist—Florence Quartararo. Miss Quartararo, one of the Metropolitan's youngest and most promising prima donnas, is heard in the first act aria, *Tacea la notte placida* from *Trovatore* and the duet from the first act of Puccini's *Tosca*, in which she is paired with Ramon Vinay.

Miss Quartararo has a most attractive voice, and she sings with remarkable ease and fluency. Her *Trovatore* aria is, for the most part, excellently presented with fresh, vibrant tone. As might be expected, her singing does not have the authority of a thoroughly seasoned Leonora, and at times the voice seems on the light side for this music. The high B-flats are not as effective as they might be, and are lacking in impact, but the second section of the aria shows admirable flexibility. The *Tosca* music seems

better suited to the new singer, who shows flashes of temperament and textual sense. Ramon Vinay's rich, dark tenor is not an ideal one to team with Miss Quartararo's voice; nevertheless it is an interesting combination and the record sounds good.

Licia Albanese comes forward with two Massenet arias, the *Adieu notre petite table* from *Manon*, and the popular *Il est doux* from *Herodiade*. Both numbers are sung with considerable intensity. Miss Albanese is one of the best of today's recording sopranos.

Eleanor Steber presents the *Valse* from Gounod's *Romeo et Juliette* with a sense of youthful freshness that well becomes it. She adds extra embellishments (as was the practice of the prima donnas of the late 19th century), and she gives a good high C at the close. Her chromatic roulade, however, cannot compare with Emma Eames', if you care to dig up that interesting relic.

Miss Steber also sings *Voi che sapete* from *Nozze di Figaro*, which shows her excellent Mozart style. Her record compares very favorably with Bidù Sayão's charming performance for Columbia.

All these selections are beautifully and vividly recorded.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Verdi: Otello—Era piu calmo? (Act IV, Scene 1). One side, and **Verdi: Otello**—Canzone del Salce: Mia Madre aveva una povera ancella (Act IV, Scene 1). Two sides, and **Verdi: Otello**—Ave Maria (Act IV, Scene 2). (Sung in Italian). Gabriella Gatti (soprano) and Nancy Evans (contralto) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vincenzo Bellezza and Alberto Erede. 2-12" discs (V-DB-6712 and V-DB-6713) (manual sequence). \$5.25.

This is a very beautiful recording, from every standpoint, of what is probably the most wonderful scene in Italian opera.

Verdi is here at his greatest, for he has captured the very essence of Shakespeare's tragedy. Nowhere has he written music that is more psychologically or spiritually profound.

This new British recording begins with the evocative passage for woodwinds that serves as a brief but unforgettable prelude to the opera's final act. It presents the dialogue between Desdemona and her faithful Emilia; the heartbreaking *Willow Song*, and the *Ave Maria*, where Verdi has caught in music the burnished perfection of some *cinquescento* painting. The music runs without a cut to the entrance of the vengeful Moor.

Too often when this scene is placed on records, the results are hurried—a defect that is fatal to the complete realization of the situation. Here, for once, on four surfaces, the scene attains all its spaciousness, all its serene and hopeless resignation.

Gabriella Gatti, with her floating, rich tones, is an ideal choice for this music. Her singing has line and unforced beauty of tone, and her opulent lower notes are attained with no audible break in the vocal scale. Mme. Gatti's voicing of the thrice repeated *Salce! Salce! Salce!* is unforgettable in its unhurried, effortless pianissimo. The entire heartbreak of Desdemona's plight is achieved in these phrases.

Nancy Evans supplies the few interjections of Emilia, and the masterfully recorded orchestra—the London Symphony—is under the direction of Vincenzo Bellezza, though, curiously enough, he yields the baton to another conductor, Alberto Erede, during the *Ave Maria*. These records can be recommended without reservations.

MAX DE SCHAUSENSEE.

Four Operatic Arias. Jan Peerce (tenor) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-1250. \$3.50. (Vinylite, VO-22, \$5.)

V-12-0497. *La Gioconda*—Cielo e mar.

I Pagliacci—Vesti la giubba.

V-12-0498. *La Juive*—Rachel, quand du Seigneur.

La Tosca—E Lucevan le stelle.

Jan Peerce may well be proud of these four new additions to his operatic list, for in them he displays some of the best singing he has done.

Mr. Peerce's voice is more honestly recorded than it has ever been; how superbly well his voice records! Over-amplification, which used to mar nearly all his records, is here absent.

The arias from *Pagliacci* and *Tosca* are particularly well done, the drama inherent in the music being tellingly projected. Perhaps Mr. Peerce's tone is too dark for the best realization of the transparently beautiful *Cielo e mar!* from Ponchielli's *La Gioconda*, while in the less familiar aria from Halevy's *La Juive*, the tenor gives you the impression that he has long been familiar with Caruso's massive and monumental recording recently reissued on red Vinylite (V-15-1004). In fact, Mr. Peerce has digested so well the Caruso interpretation that he even falls into some of the faults of that great tenor's pronunciation of the French text.

At its best, this is fine, straightforward singing, with a secure technique at the service of a man of musicianly instincts.

Erich Leinsdorf is Mr. Peerce's sympathetic conductor and the recording has been excellently achieved.

D.

Bizet: Carmen—Je dis que rien ne m'épouvante—Air de Micaëla (Act III). One side, and **Charpentier: Louise**—Depuis le jour (Act III). (Sung in French). Eleanor Steber (soprano) and the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Susskind. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6514). \$2.63.

While on a visit to England Eleanor Steber made

some recordings for H. M. V. This is the first disc to reach this country. Let us see what the critic of *The Gramophone* (London) has to say about Miss Steber's renditions of these well-known arias:

"If Eleanor Steber does not sound much like the trembling little figure (Micaëla) the opening words describe, the splendid quality of her singing quite carries one away. It is lovely in tone, sure in attack, and the artist is equipped with a particularly appealing *portamento*. Her recording of *Depuis le jour* is by far the best I have ever heard and has in it a real feeling of rapture . . .

"The orchestral accompanying is good and the horns, which precede Micaëla's air, are, thank goodness, in tune and clear, and not an indistinct wobble of sound. The balance with the voice is particularly good in the 'Louise' air, and so we get the thrill of the climax. I warmly recommend the superb singing of this artist and the general excellence of the recording."

Leoncavallo: Pagliacci—Prologue: Si puo! Paolo Silveri (baritone) and the Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, conducted by Franco Patane. 1-12" disc (C-72642D). \$1.25.

This recording was made in 1946 during Silveri's first season at Covent Garden (London)—incidentally the first time that this artist had sung outside of his native Italy. He made a great hit with English audiences and English Columbia engaged him for a series of recordings. We believe that this is the first disc in this group to be re-pressed in this country. If it is well received, and we surely feel that it should be, it is likely that others will follow. Silveri has an excellent voice of much richness and power and is fully in the Italian operatic tradition. Those who like their Italian opera with a real garlic flavor will find Sig. Silveri very palatable. An added feature is the splendid orchestral accompaniment supplied by the Royal Opera House Orchestra under the brilliant direction of Franco Patane.

Mozart: Die Zauberfloete, K. 620—In diesen heil'gen Hallen (Act II). One side, and **Mozart: Die Zauberfloete, K. 620**—O Isis und Osiris (Act II). (Sung in English). Oscar Natzka (bass) with the orchestra and chorus of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, conducted by Karl Ranki. 1-12" disc (C-72641D). \$1.25.

Mozart: Don Giovanni, K. 527—In quali eccessi (recit.) and Mi tradi quell' alma ingrata (aria). (Sung in Italian). Elizabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano) and the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Joseph Krips. 1-12" discs (C-72640D). \$1.25.

Oscar Natzka has a gorgeous voice—a true *basso profundo*; such a voice appears perhaps once in a generation. However, we do not feel that Mr. Natzka is suitable for the Mozart arias that he records on this

disc. His renditions lack the spiritual quality so necessary for the role of the High Priest in Mozart's immortal opera. For the *Song of the Flea* and such selections Natzka might be perfect, but for the present arias he lacks that something that makes them lifelike.

The Viennese soprano, Elizabeth Schwarzkopf, will be remembered for her excellent work in Columbia's recent recording of *Ein Deutsches Requiem* (Brahms). We note that in addition to the record listed above, Miss Schwarzkopf has made a number of other recordings for English Columbia, and we hope that they will likewise be made available in the American market. She has a voice of great beauty, a rare sense of the artistic, and a technique that places her in the front rank of singers of our day. The present disc is a fine example of her art, and we know that those who add it to their libraries will be anxious for more recordings by Miss Schwarzkopf.

Cilea: L'Arlesiana—Lamento di Federico: E la solita storia (Act II). One side, and **Puccini: La Tosca**—E Lucevan le stelle (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Giuseppe di Stefano (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6580). \$2.63.

Here is a young Italian tenor to watch! It would seem to us that he has everything. A voice of rare beauty that he always keeps well under control—he can develop a full fortissimo without shouting and sing long passages *mezzo-voce* producing the most lovely tones. It is truly a delight to listen to Sig. Stefano.

In the shipment from abroad that contained this remarkable disc was another giving examples of two Sicilian folk songs by the same artist. This latter record is listed under VOCAL. In considering both of these, one has a fairly good idea of the artistic value of this brilliant young tenor. We urge all lovers of fine singing in the Italian tradition to investigate both of these records.

Dramatic Scenes from Verdi Operas. Leonard Warren (baritone) and the RCA Victor Chorale and Orchestra. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-1245. \$4.75.

V-12-0461. *Otello*—Credo in un dio crudel.
Masked Ball—Eri tu?

V-12-0462. *Rigoletto*—Pari siamo!
Rigoletto—Cortigiani, vil razza dannata.

V-12-0463. *Il Trovatore*—Il balen del suo Sorriso.
Il Trovatore—Per me ora fatale.

Opera fans, especially those who have been following the brilliant career of the American baritone, Leonard Warren, will find this album of supreme interest. It contains a series of arias that give Mr. Warren ample opportunity to display his many talents in the field of Italian opera. RCA Victor has seen to

it that the soloist is well supported by a fine orchestra and chorus.

All of the arias are well-known and are the high spots in some of Verdi's most popular works. The reproduction throughout is excellent.

Godard: Jocelyn—Berceuse: Cachés dans cet asile. (Sung in French). One side, and **Schubert: Ave Maria, Op. 52, No. 6.** (Sung in Latin). Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Rainaldo Zamboni. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6619). \$2.63.

Gigli's host of admirers on this side of the Atlantic will doubtless welcome the arrival of the present disc which came in a recent shipment from England. Both selections have great popularity and Gigli sings them with sincerity and rare taste. The recording in both cases has been most successfully accomplished.

Rossini: Il Barbiere di Siviglia—Largo al factotum (Act I). One side, and **Verdi: Otello**—Era la notte (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Tito Gobbi (baritone) with orchestra conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6626). \$2.63.

Tito Gobbi is a name to remember! His first record arrived from England recently and has startled the opera fans who have heard it. He has a brilliant baritone voice capable of the finest shading and his diction is just about perfect. The present disc shows this artist's rare versatility. On the first side we have the lively *Largo al factotum* which he tosses off with dispatch, bringing out the humor of the selection without clowning. Then we have the *Era la notte* sung throughout *mezzo-voce*—as artistic a rendition as we have ever heard. We repeat, Tito Gobbi is a name to remember! This disc is a fine introduction to a very remarkable artist.

VOCAL



Four Songs of Rachmaninoff. James Melton (tenor) accompanied by Carroll Hollister (piano), featuring Oscar Shumsky (violin). 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-1251. \$3.50.

James Melton is eminently suited to passionate, romantic music such as is found in these four well-known Rachmaninoff songs. His voice, style and temperament lend themselves easily to the publication of such sentiments; in other words, Mr. Melton is a *natural* for this album.

Many years ago the unforgettable John McCormack joined forces with the equally hard-to-forget Fritz Kreisler in recording two of these numbers. Later he recorded *To the Children* during the early years of electrical reproduction. It has often been said that Melton is following in the steps of his

great predecessor, and this album would certainly substantiate this impression, for not only the selections but even the phrasing and tonal features remind one vividly of the great and lamented Irish tenor.

Melton sings most effectively, though if you recall the McCormack recordings you will miss his wondrous pianissimos, his veritable whisper on the last note of *In the Silence of the Night*. Mr. Melton is never able to reduce the volume of his voice to any great extent. He is given to singing on one dynamic level. Nevertheless, he is a singer who can please and charm, and that is a great deal.

Violin obbligati are supplied most efficiently by Oscar Shumsky, and Carroll Hollister, one of America's best accompanists, is at the piano. Recording is on the loud side.

The songs that Mr. Melton has chosen for this album are: *In the Silence of the Night*; *O Cease Thy Singing, Maiden Fair*; *To the Children*; and *The Cherry Tree*. D.

Buxtehude: *Aperite mihi portas justitiae.* (Sung in Latin). Else Sigfuss (contralto), Axel Schiotz (tenor) and H. Norgaard (bass) with instrumental accompaniment. 1-12" disc (V-12-0533). \$1.25.

(This annotation is reprinted from the June, 1948, issue. It appeared in this place when the imported recording of this work was reviewed.)

This cantata for alto, tenor, bass and two violins with continuo by the distinguished 17th century organist and composer, Dietrich Buxtehude, is one of the loveliest little works we have heard in many a long day. It was recorded under the auspices of The Danish Society for Information, to whom we should all be most grateful. It is just such unusual items that make the lot of a record reviewer tolerable. True, they do not come along very often, but when they do, hearing them makes up for the long hours we spend in listening to repeated recordings of music that we have heard over and over again.

Excellent artists, headed by the distinguished tenor, Axel Schiotz, were chosen for this recording—the blending of these fine voices with the interesting accompaniment makes a musical experience that we recommend most highly to all discerning music lovers.

Hugo Wolf Songs. (Sung in German). Paul Matthen (bass-baritone) with piano accompaniments by Bertha Melnik. 2-10" discs in album. Hargail Set HN-800. \$2.63.

This is but a little album containing only two 10-inch discs, but it is a mighty important one, especially so for those music lovers who are interested in the *lieder* of Hugo Wolf. It is important because Paul Matthen is well equipped to interpret such songs and gives performances on these discs that call for high praise. It is also important because it contains the first electrical recordings of three Wolf songs,

namely, *Der Jäger*; *Frage und Antwort*; and *Jägerlied*. The other two numbers in this collection, *Benedict die Sel'ge Mutter* and *Fussreise* have been recorded abroad but are not generally available in this country.

Our only criticism of these recordings is that the piano accompaniments do not come out as distinctly as we would like them—the voice is given prominence at the expense of the piano.

Bishop—arr. Walton: *Home, Sweet Home.* One side, and ***The Last Rose of Summer.*** Ada Alsop (soprano) with Boyd Neel String Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel. 1-12" disc (L-T-5007). \$2.10.

The English critics thought particularly well of this disc but somehow we can't get very much excited about it. Miss Alsop has a truly beautiful voice and we hope that other of her English recordings will come to this country. It seems rather like "carrying coals to Newcastle" to import a disc containing selections that have been more than adequately recorded in this country many, many times.

Cantorials. Cantor Arele Diamond with Sholom Secunda (piano). 2-10" discs in album. Disc Set 934. \$2.89.

Cantor Arele Diamond has sung in a number of synagogues in Greater New York, and at present he is affiliated with a Brooklyn congregation. He is noted for his fine lyric tenor voice which he uses so fittingly in the liturgy of his religion. This little album will have a strong appeal to all those who are interested in music of this character.

The selections in the present album are: *Birchas Kohanim* (A Synagogue Prayer for everyday); *Mi Sheoso Nisim* (New Moon Blessing); *Hansbomo Loch* (Holiday Prayer for Slichos and Yom Kippur); and *Odom Yesodo Meofor* (for Roshashona and Yom Kippur).

Sibelius: *Black Roses, Op. 36, No. 1.* One side, and ***Sibelius: The Tryst, Op. 37, No. 5*** 1901. Joan Hammond (soprano) with piano accompaniment by Gerald Moore. 1-10" disc (V-B-9445). \$1.42.

For those who might wish recordings of these two rather well-known Sibelius songs sung in English, the present disc may hold some attraction. However, the previous recordings sung in Finnish seem more satisfactory to us. Miss Hammond gives us the impression that she is standing behind a huge grand piano and trying so very hard to project her voice through the rather rumbling bass of that instrument. This is just the reverse of most vocal recordings; usually the singer is placed right up to the microphone, and many times the accompanying piano sounds as if it were away off in the distance. That is not good but the predicament Miss Hammond

seems to be in is much worse.

Very seldom does HMV issue a disc that is not up to its high standard technically, but in the present instance it appears that this one slipped through.

Cantu a Timuni (Sicilian Folk Song). One side, and **A la Barcillunisa** (Sicilian Folk Song). Giuseppe di Stefano (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-10" disc (V-DA-1877.) \$1.95.

Under OPERA there is listed another record by the brilliant young Italian tenor, Giuseppe di Stefano. It contains arias from *L'Arlesiana* and *La Tosca*. With these two discs one may judge quite accurately the artistic value of this new singer. We urge all lovers of fine singing in the Italian tradition to investigate both of these records.

Wolf: Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt. One side, and **Schumann: Die Kartenlegerin, Op. 31, No. 2.** (Sung in German). Elizabeth Höngen (contralto) accompanied by Hans Zipper (piano). 1-10" disc (C-17588D). \$1.

This little disc will introduce to many Americans one of the leading contraltos of the Vienna State Opera, Elizabeth Höngen. Miss Höngen has a rich voice of fine quality and a fine sense of lieder. Of particular importance is her superb rendition of Hugo Wolf's *Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt*. We understand that this splendid artist has made a number of operatic recordings in Europe and we hope that Columbia will soon re-press some of them in this country. They should prove very interesting.

Gems from Sigmund Romberg Shows, Vol. 2. Soloists, orchestra, and chorus directed by Sigmund Romberg. 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-1256. \$5.

Sigmund Romberg directs a group of able vocalists, chorus, and a fine orchestra in a number of his most popular hits from his various shows—an attractive little album that should enjoy a wide sale.

From "New Moon" are *Lover, Come Back to Me; Wanting You;* and *Stout-Hearted Men*. From "Blossom Time" is *Song of Love*. From "My Maryland" are *Silver Moon; Your Land and My Land;* and *Mother*. From "Desert Song" is *Desert Song Valse*.

PIANO



Moussorgsky: Pictures at an Exhibition. Vladimir Horowitz (piano). 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1249. \$6.

There is no crying need for this work as the catalogs are well supplied with various versions of *Pictures at an Exhibition*, both piano and orchestral; however, any fine performance of a work must always

be welcomed and given a fair appraisal. Certainly Horowitz has provided as substantial an interpretation as one can imagine. It is useless to remark about his technical ability; there is no question that the performance is fluent. It is also spirited and fervent with a driving conviction that commands your attention.

Victor has a competent version by Brailowsky (DM-861) in the catalog. Brailowsky's canvases are not as large or deeply etched as Horowitz's massive pictures. Each interpreter has tinted the work with his individual characteristics. The only other piano version available is by Moiseivitch on imported records. Orchestral versions with orchestrations by Caillet, Ravel, and Stokowski are available, nearly all of which have individual points of superiority. From our observations, nearly everyone prefers an orchestral *Pictures* to the original piano score, although the die-hards swear Moussorgsky knew what he was doing. For those who insist on the piano score, Horowitz will slake their thirst with generous ease. The rest of us will appreciate the effort but house an orchestral transcription in our library. The color of the transcriptions greatly widens the possibilities of expressing Moussorgsky's remarkable composition.

Vladimir Horowitz has edited *Pictures*, going back to the original published edition, and touched it up in various spots. His version is good virtuoso piano music. Two pages of excellent notes in the present album are worth following for a better understanding of this colorful score. The reproduction is good; it has nice perspective. S.

Dohnányi: Variations on a Nursery Theme for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 25. Cyril Smith (piano) and the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-779. \$4.75.

A hearty welcome for this set! The only other version on discs was a fine one with the composer himself at the piano (Vic. DM-162) but a modern recording has been in order for some time. We hope the appearance of this new set will re-kindle the interest of many persons in this work. The Dohnányi *Variations* is an absolutely enchanting thing that should appeal to an unusually wide audience. Nothing could be easier to take than this music, and yet it is music of uncommon merit. Theme and variations being one of our favorite forms, we are of course pleased before it even starts, but the skill and grace which Dohnányi exhibits rivets one's attention to the music. Cyril Smith, a highly regarded English pianist, does this music with the proper feeling and Sargent is in a most responsive vein, capturing the niceties of the score all along the way. The reproduction is good, except for the opening part, which sounded fuzzy on our set. Other pressings may be all right, for rarely do our British brethren slip on recording.

The nursery theme is the sweet and familiar French tune *Ab, vous dirai-je, Maman* to which our youngsters often sing the alphabet. Good humor abounds throughout the score, beginning at once with a ponderous and weighty (and rather bombastic) introduction, after which the solo piano enters with the naïve little theme. Eleven variations follow, every one a gem and a pleasure to hear, and the work closes with a fugal *finale*. It is priceless fun and delectable listening, in addition to which it is regarded as a masterpiece of modern music (written in 1922). S.

Shostakovich Plays His Own Compositions. Dmitri Shostakovich (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Mercury Set DM-12. \$3.92.

Seven Children's Pieces

Three Fantastic Dances, Op. 5.

Polka from the Golden Age, Op. 22.

Eight Preludes from Op. 34 (24 Preludes).

Here is an album that may well be a collector's item. It is pretty well established that Shostakovich is a world figure in the realm of music, and while he has given up the concert platform to devote his time to composition, a series of recordings in which he plays his own works is sure to have considerable historic value. This is especially true in the present case because of the personal touch given to his recording of the *Seven Children's Pieces* in which he announces the title of each little selection before he plays it.

These recordings, which have been nicely accomplished, were made during Shostakovich's visit to Prague for the 1946 International Music Festival.

Scriabin: Nocturne in F-sharp minor, Op. 5, No. 1. One side, and **Scriabin: Nocturne in A major, Op. 5, No. 2.** Friedrich Wührer (piano). 1-10" disc (V-EG-6297). \$1.42.

This little disc has been in the European catalogs for several years but has not been generally available in America for sometime. A recent shipment from abroad contained a few copies. For the comparatively few music lovers in this country who are interested in Scriabin this record will be of prime importance.

Hits from Favorite Films. Harry Sukman (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Artist Records Set YK-16. \$5.25.

The young Chicago pianist, Harry Sukman, who recently appeared as a soloist at the Hollywood Bowl, has selected a number of selections that have been featured in recent films for this album of piano music. Mr. Sukman is an able artist, and while the selections for the most part are not of great moment, they will doubtless appeal to those who remember hearing them in the theatre.

The selections are: *Laura; Stella by Starlight;*

Chopin: *Polonaise in A flat; Flight of the Bumble-Bee; Theme from Scheherazade.*

The piano reproduction is very good and the records are made of a nonbreakable material.

VIOLIN



Ravel: *Tzigane.* Ruggiero Ricci (violin) and the Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Eugène Bigot. 1-12" disc (PD-566.248). \$2.

Both Heifetz and Menuhin made recordings of this Ravel show piece with piano accompaniment and now we have this French Polydor disc with the brilliant violinist, Ruggiero Ricci splendidly supported by the famous Lamoureux Orchestra. We don't recall ever having heard *Tzigane* with its fascinating orchestral background—it is quite interesting. Ricci is an artist of rare ability and the reproduction is satisfactory.

ORGAN



Bach: *Toccatina and Fugue in D minor.* Three sides, and Bach: *Toccatina, Adagio, and Fugue in C.* Richard Ellsasser playing the organ of the First Baptist Church, Oakland, Calif. 4-12" discs in album. Oliver Set No. 1. \$7.35.

There is much to recommend this album. It is rather well recorded, a shade heavy on the lowest notes, but remarkably clear and lifelike. A single condenser microphone was used, which gives a fine perspective. Oliver claims that no attenuation or compression whatsoever is used in the reproduction, for they are striving to produce truly high fidelity records, much as Adelphia is doing. The material of the records is a new break-resistant flexible material, whose surfaces we found to be unusually good. So technically, we can offer high praise for this set, the only exception being some abrupt and ill-advised breaks between sides.

For the first in a series of albums of classical and modern organ works recorded in the summer of 1947, Mr. Ellsasser has chosen familiar fare. Both of these monumental compositions of Bach are so well known to organists and to those who frequent organ recitals that comment on them is unnecessary. However, Mr. Ellsasser's interpretations could furnish material for several pages of detailed comment. We will boil it down to the basic statement that his ideas are often unusual and unorthodox. Many of his ideas in the *Toccatina and Fugue in D minor* seem valid and convincing, but we wager that many persons will find them highly questionable. Ellsasser is twenty-two, and at eighteen had memorized and performed the complete 219 works of Bach, the youngest person to have done so. He is one of the great organ virtuosi of the day, and a series of

albums by him should prove mighty interesting. This set is worth investigation by all organ fans. S.

VIOLONCELLO



Bach: Suite No. 4 in E flat. Six sides, and **Bach: Suite No. 5 in C minor.** Pau Casals (violoncello). 7-12" discs in album (V-DBS-9181 and V-DB-9182 to V-DB-9187) (automatic sequence). \$17.07.

Volume Eight of the Bach Society completes the series of six unaccompanied 'cello sonatas (or suites) by the renowned Casals. For 'cellists this set will be thrice welcomed, and for those who admire Casals likewise. The untold hours that Casals must have spent through the years to master this difficult music is staggering. He justly deserves the world's acclaim for the accomplishment. For one who does not care for the music itself, this reviewer admits that Casals' playing surpassed the music and compelled attention—more, it was a unique experience. That so much musical beauty can be extracted from an unaccompanied 'cello is a revelation by comparison to the welter of tone we usually hear from orchestras and other ensembles.

The greatness of Casals, then, is undeniable; but we cannot believe that the music which Bach wrote is as great as the man who plays it on these records. Those who bow to the name Bach will recoil at such a thought; however, the content of the music has eluded some brilliant minds, and the apparent greatness seems to stem from the miraculous patterns which Bach wrote and little else. Casals has certainly applied great freedom to his interpretation of this music, thereby making it very palatable, even interesting and absorbing. Bach may have conceived it thus; if so, he is mighty fortunate in having Casals perpetuate it permanently on records. No composer could be accorded more exquisite artistry. S.

HARPSICHORD



Sweelinck: Variations on "Est-ce Mars?" Two sides, and **Sweelinck: Fantasia Chromatica.** Putnam Aldrich (harpsichord). 2-12" discs in album. Technichord Set T-12. \$3.94.

Technichord, one of the older independent record companies, does not release any great quantity of recordings but when a new release is made it is always an item of interest. One can depend upon its being splendidly recorded; it is usually music that the larger companies would pass by and it is performed by a thoroughly capable artist. Such is the present release: an album containing two selections by the Dutch composer, Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562-1621) and superbly performed by the dis-

tinguished scholar and harpsichordist, Putnam Aldrich.

As Sweelinck is practically unknown to record collectors, because of the very few recordings that ever have been made of his compositions, it might be well to introduce him to our readers; we can think of no better way than to quote from Dr. Aldrich's interesting and highly illuminating notes that are included with this album.

"At the dawn of the Baroque era, about a century before the birth of Bach, a new style of instrumental composition emerged in the Protestant north of Europe. Its founder and chief exponent was J. P. Sweelinck, who, in 1580, succeeded his father as organist at the Old Church in Amsterdam. Sweelinck's fame as a virtuoso grew until crowds flocked to the church each time he played. From all countries of Europe, especially from Germany, disciples came to Amsterdam to learn from the master: Melchior Schmidt, Paul Siefert, Samuel Scheidt and Heinrich Scheidemann. These founders of the north German school, who passed the tradition on to Bach through the intervening generation of Buxtehude and Pachelbel, acknowledged their indebtedness to Sweelinck and nicknamed him 'maker of organists'."

We can allot no further space to this unique album, but we hope that we have written enough to arouse the curiosity of our discerning readers. For those who are interested, the booklet that accompanies it gives a detailed description of the music, the particular harpsichord on which it is played, and other pertinent data. R.



DICTION

Shakespeare: Hamlet (excerpts). Laurence Olivier and supporting cast with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Muir Mathieson. Five sides, and **Walton: Hamlet—Funeral March.** Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Muir Mathieson. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1273. \$4.75.

Laurence Olivier's motion picture of *Hamlet* is probably a great achievement in the realm of the silver screen, but his is not a great reading of the part, if we may judge from these excerpts taken from the sound track of the film. His soliloquies are full of pauses that may be eased by the action in the film but are deadly to listen to without seeing the action. Also they lack color and are dull indeed when compared with the readings of John Gielgud or Maurice Evans.

The best we can say for this album is that it will probably make a suitable souvenir for those who have seen the picture. We cannot recommend it for students of Shakespeare; there are many better readings than Mr. Olivier's on records.

CHILDREN



The Man Without a Country. Bing Crosby (narrator), Frank Lovejoy and supporting cast, with music conducted by Victor Young. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set DAU-3. \$5.10.

The Man Without a Country is a poetic narrative by Jean Holloway based on Edward Everett Hale's immortal story. In this recording, Bing Crosby is the narrator and Frank Lovejoy plays the part of the principal character, Philip Nolan. There is original music by Victor Young and the entire production was directed by Robert Welch.

The theme of the whole story is intensely patriotic and we presume that the idea is to have these discs available for children in the homes and schools of America. We could all do with a little more patriotism in these trying days and so these discs may very well serve a very useful purpose.

Decca has done an excellent job in this presentation. The recordings have been pressed on extremely smooth unbreakable material.

Noah and the Ark and Lot's Wife. Ed Colmans (speaking) with sound effects. 3-10" discs in album (automatic sequence). Sacred Records Set BS-1. \$3.50.

These famous old Bible stories are nicely told by Ed Colmans with plenty of sound effects and music to especially interest the children. Mr. Colmans certainly makes them much more exciting than they appear on the printed page. The reproduction and record surfaces are satisfactory.

MISCELLANEOUS



Zimbalist: Sarasateana. William Primrose (viola) accompanied by David Stimer (piano). 2-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-1242. \$3.

At the request of his friend and colleague, William Primrose, the distinguished violinist and teacher, Efrem Zimbalist, has composed four brilliant little pieces to which he gives the general title *Sarasateana*. These gay little tunes are based on selections from the four books of Spanish Dances by the 19th century violinist and composer, Pablo de Sarasate.

Primrose tosses these off in fine style, ably supported by his accompanist, David Stimer. The reproduction is of the best.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—A&H, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletons, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CE—Cetra, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CT—Concertone, D—Decca, DI—Disc, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, HU—Harvard Film Service, HW—Hargall, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, L—London Gramophone, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, OK—Okeh, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technisbord, V—Victor, and VX—Vox, W—Woodwind.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$9.75.

The Concert Companion. By Robert Bagar and Louis Biancolli with an introduction by Deems Taylor. xi + 868 pp. Whittlesey House (New York). Price \$4.95.

Harold Bauer, His Book. By Harold Bauer. 306 pp. Illustrated. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$3.75.

The Record Book (International Edition). By David Hall. xii + 1394 pp. Oliver Durrell, Inc. (New York). Price \$7.50.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

A Dictionary of Musical Themes. Compiled by Harold Barlow and Sam Morgenstern with an introduction by John Erskine. xiii + 656 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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"I Can Hear It Now." Edward R. Murrow (narrator). 5-12" discs in album, Columbia Set MM-800. \$7.25. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (C-ML-4095). \$4.85.

We feel that the historic recording listed above is worthy of special notice, so we have shifted it from its regular place to the place of honor in this issue. Nearly two years were required for its preparation and over five hundred hours of old broadcasts were listened to and countless hours were devoted to other research.

This dramatic work was prepared by Edward R. Murrow, one of radio's most distinguished newscasters, in collaboration with Fred W. Friendly, prominent radio producer-writer. The narration on these discs is by Mr. Murrow and was produced for Columbia by J. G. Gude.

This audible document covers world history from 1932, with the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt in the United States and the rise to supreme power of Hitler in Germany, to V-J Day, 1945, with the Japanese surrender aboard the battleship Missouri on September 2nd. Important headlines of those thirteen years are brought to life by inserting in the text, that Mr. Murrow so eloquently reads, the voices of the prime characters in the various dramatic instances. Dozens of persons who made world history during that exciting period are heard; just a few of them are: Roosevelt, Churchill, Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, Chamberlain, the Duke of Windsor, Dewey, Willkie, Truman, Eisenhower, MacArthur, and such interesting lesser lights as: Will Rogers, Huey Long, John L. Lewis, and Lou Gehrig. The whole recording is fascinating. When it arrived in the studio, we were getting ready to go to press with this issue, and we thought that we would listen to a record or two to get the general idea. We put on the first side and became so interested that we forgot all about deadlines and played the ten sides straight through. We don't know when we have had forty-five minutes quite so exciting—the highlights of thirteen momentous years dramatically portrayed in less than an hour. Here is history reincarnated by the voices of the men who made it.

Columbia is to be congratulated for making this authentic historical audible document available—one that will doubtless be referred to throughout the ages to come.

Charles Delaunay's New Hot Discography.
Edited by Walter E. Schaap and George Avakian. xviii + 608 pp. Criterion Music Corporation (New York). Price \$6.

As regular readers of THE NEW RECORDS know, from time to time events of especial interest in the field of Hot Jazz are covered in these pages. Here is truly such an event! Persons who have the original Delaunay's *Hot Discography* will surely wish to have this book; those who missed the original (there were many who did, for it went out of print very quickly) have been waiting for this book for many years.

The present book purports to give "Titles, personnel, dates, and numbers of 20,000 records covering 30 years of jazz." This it undoubtedly does. It has been completely revised, reset, and is exceptionally easy to use.

For example, on page xii can be found instructions for using the *New Hot Discography*. We urge all buyers to read this part first because it makes the book much easier to understand. The names of every artist listed in the book are listed separately in the Index, giving the page numbers on which records of this artist are listed. The book, itself, is divided into two main parts: the first part deals with the jazz pioneers and the second deals with important artists who have come to the fore since 1930.

It is difficult, indeed, to imagine a jazz record collector who would not be interested in this book. All we really need say are the words with which Mr. Delaunay opens the Foreword: "*Le voici, Messieurs.*"

* * *

Undoubtedly a great many music lovers are becoming interested in the new Columbia Long-Playing (LP) "Microgroove" records. The pub-

lishers of this bulletin have obtained a limited number of catalogs listing all LP releases through October 1948; a copy of this catalog will be mailed gratis to any reader requesting it.

* * *

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues published during the last sixteen years are available. The price is 5c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 125 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

ORCHESTRA



Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 4 in A, Op. 90 ("Italian"). Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1259. \$4.75.

If this set were a duplicate of Koussevitzky's original recording of the work, except for more modern reproduction, there would be no review to write. His earlier set (DM-294) has remained a criterion in the past decade. In its day the recording was a brilliant and thrilling affair that even today may be appreciated. The performance was for most of us as nearly perfect as we could wish. Taken at brisk tempi, Koussevitzky's conception of the music was carried off brilliantly by the orchestra.

No two orchestral performances of the same work are alike, as anyone who has attended consecutive concerts of the same program can testify. This accounts for some small differences in the new "Italian" version compared with the old one. But Koussevitzky has used this work many times as a display piece for his orchestra, and we would imagine that even if his ardor never cooled for the work, certainly the orchestra, after a while, begins to do some of it mechanically. And so we notice the same marvelous precision and facility, the virtuoso touch in every phrase. Yet much of the first movement impressed us as a shell, beautiful to the eye, but empty within.

For those unfamiliar with the original set, this may not seem true, and we suggest they listen to the present set, for it is played with incomparable finish. Right or wrong, the rest of us will keep the old DM-294. Either Koussevitzky performance is the best, so far, on records. S.

Strauss: Also sprach Zarathustra, Op. 30. Nine sides, and **Wagner: Tristan und Isolde—Prelude to Act III.** Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 5-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1258. \$7.25.

Nearly all of Rodzinski's recordings have been competent interpretations, often more academic than

penetrating. One of the notable exceptions is the present set, which finds him very much in the vein. The Chicago Orchestra plays with richness and a remarkable variety of tone color. Throughout the piece Rodzinski seeks every opportunity to paint as vivid a picture as possible. The more lyric sections have a gentle warmth, while the heavily scored parts blaze with thrilling orchestral brilliance. We were very much impressed with this performance.

Strauss conceived his tone poem as a complement to Nietzsche's philosophical opus "Thus Spake Zarathustra: A Book for All or None." Nietzsche's impassioned flights of nature worship and the mysteries of life had as their culmination the intoxicating idea of the Superman on earth, the all-powerful, more-than-human being who would lead suffering humanity into a new and loftier way of life. Strauss claims he did not attempt to set the book to music literally nor to write philosophical music. He meant to convey by music an idea of the development of the human race from its origin, through the various phases of development, religious as well as scientific, up to Nietzsche's idea of the Superman.

Two previous recordings of *Zarathustra* have been made, one by the Chicago Orchestra under Frederick Stock. The other, and earlier one, by Koussevitzky and the Boston Orchestra, was considered tops in every way. Rodzinski's is the best for reproduction, and in our opinion a most worthy reading. S.

Music from the Eighteenth Century. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1264. \$6.

Paisiello: Nina Pazza per Amore—Overture (two sides).

Handel — arr. Beecham: Amaryllis Suite — Scherzo (one side).

Mozart: Symphony No. 27 in G, K. 199. (three sides).

Méhul: Les Deux Aveugles de Tolède—Overture (two sides).

Under Sir Thomas, eighteenth century music always receives, in addition to a sane performance, much loving care and thought and attention to detail. He brings out the niceties from an inner conviction of their loveliness. Perhaps no other period of music is more difficult to present properly than eighteenth century music; few do it as well as Sir Thomas.

Receiving its first recording, the Mozart *Symphony No. 27* turns out to be a short but inventive and pleasing little affair. In three movements, it commences with an *Allegro* of rather large proportion, although it is compressed in a short space. The *Andantino gracioso* is a lyrical second movement, and the work concludes with a dashing *Presto* finale. Touches of Haydn as well as Italian influence are

present, yet it is still Mozart at a period of his development, swift and sure.

The Scherzo from the *Amaryllis Suite* was taken from Handel's opera *Rodrigo*. The *Amaryllis Suite* was drawn from *The Origin of Design*, music which Sir Thomas assembled for the Diaghileff ballet. The two overtures are pleasant pieces which offer examples of two important composers of the period. The entire album provides a half hour of ingratiating listening. It is very well reproduced. S.

Grieg: Lyric Suite, Op. 54. National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-63. \$5.25.

While not the heaviest fare this reviewer encountered this month, the *Lyric Suite*, as recorded by Sargent, easily provided the greatest thrill. The reproduction is thoroughly excellent, and was the best of the current batch of albums on a high fidelity machine; the surfaces likewise. Sargent's performance of the music is quite captivating. The music is, of course, on the sentimental side, but so appealing; its charm is very convincing. Sargent handles it just right, and he and the orchestra unfold every bar to the queen's taste.

Grieg's *Lyric Suite, Op. 54*, originally contained six pieces for piano; later Grieg orchestrated four of them: *Shepherd Boy*, *Norwegian Rustic March*, *Nocturne*, and *March of the Dwarfs*. The *March of the Dwarfs* is that familiar jingly-jangly affair which never seems like dwarfs marching at all, but rather some strange creatures in a brisk trot. It is hardly great music, being overshadowed by the three sections which precede it, particularly the heavy perfume of the *Nocturne*. Altogether the album is a rewarding quarter-hour which should please a great many persons—light music superlatively played and recorded. S.

Wagner: Parsifal—Prelude (Act I). Three sides, and **Wagner: Parsifal—Charfreitagszauber (Act III).** Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. 3-12" discs in album (V-DB-3445 to V-DB-3447) (manual sequence). \$7.88.

The fact that a few copies of this superb reading of the *Prelude* and the *Good Friday Spell* arrived in a recent shipment from abroad will be welcome news to many music lovers. Ever since Furtwängler's recording of this well-beloved music was dropped from the RCA Victor catalog, there has been an insistent demand for it by Wagnerian collectors. Unfortunately the foreign manufacturers have not pressed these three discs in automatic sequence but those who really want this recording will probably be willing to put up with the inconvenience of the manual arrangement. Also we might mention that the recording is an old one and there is a little more surface noise than one finds on present-day records.

Those who buy this item will do so because they

wish the Furtwängler version of this music in their libraries.

Zandonai: Giulietta e Romeo—Il gioco del Torchio (Act II). One side, and **Zandonai: Giulietta e Romeo—Cavalcata (Act III).** La Scala Orchestra conducted by Vincenzo Bellezza. 1-12" disc (V-S-10141). \$.25.

Zandonai: La Via della Finestra — Serenata Medioevale. La Scala Orchestra with E. Martinenghi (violoncello) conducted by Carlo Schüricht. Three sides, and **Reznicek: Donna Diana—Overture.** La Scala Orchestra conducted by Carlo Schüricht. 2-12" discs (V-DB-5401 and V-DB-5402) (manual sequence). \$5.25.

Little of the music of the Italian operatic composer, Riccardo Zandonai (1883-) has been heard in this country and so these discs that have recently been received from Italy are of particular importance. The first disc contains two orchestral selections from one of his most popular operas, *Giulietta e Romeo*—the Torch Dance and Romeo's Ride. The following pair of discs contains a musical interlude from his comic opera, *La Via della Finestra*, in which there is much solo work for the violoncello. All of these selections are worthy of attention. They have been nicely recorded and will prove attractive to those venturesome music lovers who like to stray from the beaten path.

Lecocq—arr. Mohaupt: Mlle. Angot Suite. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Efrem Kurtz. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-305. \$3.50.

This album is a lot of fun! If you are among the thousands who have enjoyed Mr. Kurtz's recording of Offenbach's *Gaité Parisienne*, you'll think this album is great stuff. This suite is made up of dance tunes from Lecocq's most popular work for the stage, *La Fille de Mme. Angot*. It starts out with a fascinating waltz and ends with that naughty dance that was so popular in the gay nineties, the Can-Can. It's all very gay and pleasant listening. Kurtz, who has had many years' experience as musical director of various ballet companies, is the ideal conductor of such music, and he surely makes the most of his opportunity in this instance. The reproduction is splendid.

Here's a hint to record dealers: don't sell this item short—it looks like a sure-fire hit to us.

Debussy: Nocturnes. (No. 1, Nuages; No. 2, Fêtes; No. 3, Sirènes). National Symphony Orchestra and Luton Choral Society conducted by Sidney Beer. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-62. \$7.35.

A modern recording, containing all three sections, of Debussy's *Nocturnes* has been needed for some time. However, we doubt whether the present version

will be generally considered better than the Stokowski-Philadelphia Orchestra set (Vic. DM-630). It is to be preferred to the other complete versions by the Paris Conservatory Orchestra under Coppola and the Debussy Festival Orchestra under Inghelbrecht. We are perhaps giving our personal opinion, but as we listened to the National Symphony we could not feel that Beer had quite caught the transcendental mood of this highly evocative music.

We rather hope that our readers will not let our opinion weigh too heavily, but, if they are interested, will listen to the present album and appraise this recording for themselves.

Puccini: Edgar—Intermezzo (Act III). One side, and **Mascagni: Guglielmo Ratcliff**—Intermezzo (Act IV). La Scala Orchestra conducted by C. Carlo Sabajno. 1-12" disc (V-S-10368). \$2.

Italian record buyers seem to go in for recordings of orchestral selections from their various operas judging from the vast number of such records that are listed in their catalogs. The present disc contains two instrumental selections from little known operas by famous Italian composers. Both will probably be new to most of our readers. They have been faithfully recorded by a fine orchestra.

Schiassi: Christmas Symphony. The Arthur Fiedler Sinfonietta conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-11-0025). \$1.25.

This attractive record was first released by RCA Victor in time for Christmas 1940 and then for some unknown reason it was dropped from the catalog. We are delighted to note that it is being reinstated for the present Yuletide.

Little is known of the Italian violinist and composer, Gaetano Maria Schiassi, who was born at Bologna, and died at Lisbon in 1754. His best remembered work is his *Christmas Symphony*—a thoroughly delightful little piece in symphonic form consisting of five short movements. Fiedler plays them with a finesse that brings out their sparkling quality in a most effective way, and thus we do not hesitate to recommend this pleasing recording.

Wagner: Die Walküre—Wotan's Abschied and Feuerzauber (Act III). Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-301. \$3.50.

About 15 years ago, Leopold Stokowski recorded this scene—the finale from *Walküre*—in conjunction with Lawrence Tibbett and the Philadelphia Orchestra for RCA Victor. Now, Mr. Stokowski comes forward once more with this scene on records, this time with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York and without benefit of a vocalist.

The noted conductor has always been an exciting exponent of the music of Richard Wagner. He has

the imagination, the ardor and the sense of theater necessary for such music.

The present performance sounds transparently beautiful, and the scene is probably better recorded than ever before. For one who likes the combination of Wagner and Stokowski, this fine album is a must.

D.

Bach: Weihnachts-Oratorium—Sinfonie. One and one-half sides, and **Handel** — arr. Beecham: **Amaryllis Suite**—Gavotte. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (V-12-0583). \$1.25.

This selection, generally known as *Shepherd's Christmas Music* from the Christmas Oratorio, is about as charming music as Bach ever wrote, and as presented by Sir Thomas, it casts a spell of loveliness that is irresistible. One has the urge to listen to it again and again. It has been splendidly recorded.

The little Handel piece that completes the second side of this disc is very pleasing, too. Here is a record that should enjoy a wide and continued sale.

Do You Remember? Morton Gould and his Orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-787. \$4.90. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-10" disc (C-ML-2028). \$3.85.

Morton Gould, in a nostalgic mood, recalls some of the biggest hits of yesteryear and offers his arrangements of them in this unique collection. A must for Gould fans.

The pieces are: *Nola*; *My Blue Heaven*; *Dardanella*; *The Sheik of Araby*; *Twelfth Street Rag*; *Whispering*; *Poor Butterfly*; and *On the Sunny Side of the Street*.

Gounod: Faust—Ballet Music. City of Birmingham Orchestra conducted by George Weldon. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-304. \$3.50.

Numerous recordings have been made of this popular and tuneful music, and it doesn't seem that another album is necessary. However, the present set gives us an opportunity of hearing the City of Birmingham Orchestra under the direction of George Weldon. Mr. Weldon handles this music in a quiet and tasteful manner, and the reproduction is excellent.

Hindemith: Lively (From Five Pieces for String Orchestra in the First Position, Op. 44, No. 4). One side, and **Hindemith: Pieces in the First Position for String Quartet or String Choir, Op. 44, No. 3.** Stuyvesant Sinfonietta conducted by Sylvan Schulman. 1-12" disc (C-72606D). \$1.25.

Here is a disc containing some unusual music—several attractive little studies from the pen of the distinguished German composer, Paul Hindemith. If it were not for this record, we doubt whether many persons would ever have an opportunity of hearing these amusing little pieces.

Sibelius: The Swan of Tuonela, Op. 22, No. 3. Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra, featuring Mitchell Miller (English horn). 1-12" disc (V-12-0585). \$1.25.

There are several recorded versions of this lovely Sibelius work from which to choose but we do not believe that you will go far wrong in selecting this most recent recording. Stokowski has always been particularly fond of this selection and he gives it most loving care in the present performance.

Liszt—arr. Herbert: Liebestraume No. 3, A-flat major. One side, and **Dvorák: Slavonic Dance No. 8 in G Minor, Op. 46, No. 8.** Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-12-0581). \$1.25.

This disc contains the popular Liszt *Liebestraum*, and also one of the best-known Dvorák Slavonic Dances—thus we have two selections that have been recorded many times but never with better effect than on the present disc.

Geminiani—arr. Marinuzzi: Andante. One side, and **Wolf-Ferrari: Il Campiello—Ritornello (Act III).** La Scalla Orchestra conducted by Gino Marinuzzi. 1-10" disc (V-DA-1566). \$1.95.

Two lovely little pieces, largely for strings, played with taste by the La Scalla Orchestra and nicely recorded by Italian H. M. V. Both selections will doubtless be new to most of our readers.

CONCERTO



Mozart: Concerto No. 4 in D (K. 218). Jascha Heifetz (violin) with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1267. \$4.75.

In 1775, the nineteen-year-old Mozart wrote five concertos for violin and orchestra, completing them in April, June, September, October, and December. The fourth of these, sometimes known as the "Strassburg Concerto" from Mozart's own designation, was finished in October and is considered one of the best of the series. Mozart, a fine violinist in his own right, knew well the capabilities of the instrument; this coupled with his perfect conception of form and great melodic gift, resulted in good literature for the instrument. Compared to various more popular concertos which we hear today, these appear to be lesser essays and certainly not as flashy and exciting. However, Mozart's charm is inimitable, and when done in the proper spirit they have great appeal.

Heifetz and Beecham seem to have a capital time with this work. Beecham, of course, is well known

for his Mozart. While Heifetz is well known as a peerless virtuoso, he is also a musician of great sincerity. As in other instances, he takes on the proper approach and style for each work, and in this case comes through with truly fine Mozartian playing. The rapport between soloist and conductor is notable. Some may question the cadenzas which Heifetz has rigged up for this concerto, but then, cadenzas are cadenzas, so here are a few more for good measure. The reproduction is good—surfaces fair. In all, it is a splendid job. The only competition to talk of is Szigeti with the London Philharmonic under Beecham (Col. MM-224), formidable competition, indeed, though feeblere reproduction. S.

Tchaikovsky: Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor, Op. 23. Oscar Levant (piano) and the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. Nine sides, and **Rachmaninoff: Prelude in G major, Op. 32, No. 5.** Oscar Levant (piano). 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-785. \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia lists a dozen recorded versions of this most popular concerto. Rubinstein has two recordings listed and there is one each for Horowitz, Petri, Solomon, Moiseiwitsch and other pianists who are not so well known in this country. And now Mr. Levant comes forward with his version, ably supported by the Philadelphia Orchestra with Ormandy directing. From the commercial angle don't sell Levant short. He makes the most of his opportunity and gives a highly spectacular performance and he has a great host of fans. They will think that his performance is great stuff; and to tell the truth it really is. We predict the present album will enjoy a substantial sale.

Mozart: Concerto No. 3 in G major, K. 216. Jacques Thibaud (violin) and the Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Paul Paray. 3-12" discs in album. Vox Set 642. \$4.73.

About ten years ago Menuhin made a recording of this concerto with the Paris Symphony conducted by Georges Enesco, and it has enjoyed reasonable popularity through the years. We rather feel that this recording by Thibaud will rekindle interest in this lively and charming concerto. M. Thibaud is temperamentally qualified for the present task and his silky tone is ideally suited to the simplicity and graciousness of the lovely Mozart melodies. We enjoyed this album thoroughly and do not hesitate to recommend it to our readers.

CHAMBER MUSIC



W. Schuman: Quartet No. 3. Gordon String Quartet. 3-12" discs in album. Concert Hall Set AB. \$7.35.

William Schuman certainly rates with the best of present-day American composers, but for some un-

known reason he has been neglected by the record publishers. Therefore this fine Concert Hall recording of his *String Quartet No. 3* is of prime importance. This work was written on commission from Town Hall and the League of Composers in accordance with the terms of an award extended to the composer in 1939 by the committee composed of Mrs. Theodore Steinway, Olga Samaroff, Aaron Copland and Randall Thompson. Its first performance was given by the Coolidge Quartet at a concert at Town Hall (New York) on February 27, 1940.

The quartet is in three movements: *Introduction and Fugue*; *Intermezzo*; and *Rondo Variations*. Typical of what some critics call Schuman's "athleticism," the present work is rugged in character. In listening to it one has the impression that the composer is a man of great strength. It is intense music. It is the sort of music to which one leans forward—one instinctively makes the effort to approach it. One cannot sit back and relax and let this music come to him—it just isn't that sort of music. You may not care for it, but you cannot deny that it is vital nor that it is full of big ideas that are projected with great musical force. You may pass this item by, but if you listen to it, you will find that you either like it or dislike it. After hearing it a time or two, you will come to some definite opinion; you just can't ignore it.

It would seem to us that the Gordon String Quartet has done the work justice and that Schuman should be highly pleased with this performance. The reproduction is quite satisfactory and the discs are made of an unbreakable plastic with reasonably quiet surfaces.
R.

Bartok: Quartet No. 6 for Strings. Gertler String Quartet. 4-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-73. \$9.45.

The best of Bartok, a truly great composer, is in his string quartets. This is pretty generally conceded by erudite musicians. There is no question but that they are works that require serious study and careful contemplation. They are mature compositions and require a mature musical mind for their appreciation. Discerning music lovers have stated that they do not like them, but few, if any, have said that they are works of small merit.

The above paragraph is written as a warning. Don't select this album with the idea that you can place these discs on your phonograph and find immediate enjoyment if you are not familiar with the Bartok quartets.

We do not profess to be a great student of Bartok, but it would seem to us that the present artists give a performance quite in line with the intentions of the composer. We only had an opportunity of playing this album through twice but we gained a very satisfactory impression of the performance. The reproduction is excellent throughout.

Durante—arr. Lualdi: **Concerto in G minor.** Chamber Orchestra of the Royal Conservatory, San Pietro a Majella (Naples) conducted by Adriano Lualdi. 1-12" disc (V-DB-05354). \$2.63.

The name F. Durante—on the label of this record was a new one to us, but a little research soon brought to light that Francesco Durante (1684-1755) was a church composer highly regarded by his contemporaries. He was a student of Scarlatti and a distinguished teacher who numbered among his pupils such famous musicians as Pergolesi, Paisiello, Guglielmi and others. Baker says that "after Scarlatti, and with Leo, Durante ranks as one of the founders and chief representative of the 'Neapolitan school' of composition."

After reading up a little on Mr. Durante, we felt pretty small at not recognizing his name at once. It would seem that he was a quite important person in the field of early 18th century music in Italy.

The present selection, which the conductor arranged for chamber orchestra, is a delightful little piece and whether you are familiar with Mr. Durante or not, we rather believe that you will enjoy it.

Respighi: Suite No. 3. Rome Quartet. 2-12" discs (V-DB-4441 and V-DB-4442) (manual sequence). \$5.25.

This pair of discs contains music about as lovely and as interesting as we have heard in a long time, and we do not hesitate to recommend that all discerning music lovers at least give it a hearing. Respighi originally wrote this suite for chamber orchestra, basing it on old 16th and 17th century lute airs, and later arranged it for string quartet. The orchestral suite is in four sections: (1) *Italiana*—after an Unknown Composer; (2) *Siciliana*—after an Unknown Composer; (3) *Aria di Corte*—after Jean Baptiste Besard; (4) *Passacaglia*—after Lodovico Roncalli. When the composer arranged it for string quartet, he reversed sections 2 and 3; thus in the present recording *Siciliana* follows the *Aria di Corte*.

These records arrived in a recent shipment from Italy, and in our opinion they contain one of the choicest items in the whole lot. As we understand that it will be impossible to import any more for an indefinite time, we suggest that those who are interested get in touch with a dealer who specializes in imported recordings without delay.

A. Scarlatti—trans. Lenszewski: **Concerto in F major for Strings.** Chamber Orchestra of the Conservatory of San Pietro a Majella (Naples) conducted by Adriano Lualdi. 1-12" disc (V-DB-05352). \$2.63.

Some lovely Scarlatti melodies arranged for small string orchestra and beautifully played with taste and a fine sense of rhythm—splendidly recorded by "La Voce del Padrone." An attractive item for those who are looking for something new from the early 18th century.

Rossini: Quartet in F major. (Flute, Clarinet, Horn, and Bassoon). Members of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. 2-10" discs (V-DA-4483 and V-DA-4484) (manual sequence). \$3.89.

Until this pair of discs arrived at the studio from Italy, we had never heard this tuneful work of Rossini. We placed the first disc on our phonograph and immediately had the impression that we were listening to a barrel organ *par excellence*. The gay dance tunes and the perfect rhythm added to the illusion. Here is a pleasing and amusing novelty.

OPERA



Ravel: L'Enfant et les Sortilèges (complete opera). (Sung in French). Nadine Sautereau, Denise Scharley, André Vessières, Solange Michel, Yvon le Marc'hadour, Joseph Peyton, Odette Turba-Rabier, Martha Angelici, Maurice Prigent, Marguerite Legouhy, Claudine Verneuil and l'Orchestra National and Choir of La Radiodiffusion française conducted by Ernest Bour. Eleven sides, and **Debussy: Arabesque No. 1 in E major**, John Cockrell (harp). 6-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MOP-29. \$8.50.

We have often heard excerpts from Maurice Ravel's one-act fantasy, *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*, but never before a complete performance of this charming work, as presented on these Columbia records.

L'Enfant et les Sortilèges was first heard in 1925, though the beginnings of its creation date back ten years earlier. The text is by Colette, France's celebrated woman novelist, and Ravel was immediately visualized as the ideal musician to collaborate with the distinguished woman of letters. But Ravel, at that time, was engaged in the First World War, and matters had to wait.

From its debut, *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* (*The Child and the Sorcerers*) has been a great success. It has evoked the praise of Ravel's contemporaries, including such men as Honneger and Milhaud.

Briefly, this is all about a bad child, who exclaims, "I hate everybody. I'm naughty." He injures his animal pets and even slashes the trees in the garden. Of course, before the piece fully unravels, the child realizes he has been bad, calls for his mother and reforms. The injured animals take their leave singing, "He is a wise, a good child."

It is Ravel's music that makes *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* such delightful entertainment. The story is a sort of sophisticated satire and contains a blend of wit and fantasy, but, in the end, it is the music that constitutes the piece's greatest charm and attraction.

L'Enfant et les Sortilèges is not easy to put on successfully. A light touch is absolutely necessary.

Good taste and technical proficiency are also desirable to a degree. These qualities seem saliently present in this fine performance.

The Orchestra National and the Choir of the Radiodiffusion française were employed under the expert direction of Ernest Bour. Several charming singers also appear: Nadine Sautereau as the Child, delightfully humorous; Denise Scharley, rich-voiced as the Mother, and Martha Angelici, pure-toned and sweet as the Princess. Odette Turba-Rabier, the Opéra Comique's current coloratura soprano, has been assigned the brief but technically difficult roles of Fire and the Nightingale. The whole cast performs with knowledge and enthusiasm. Recording is excellent. All lovers of the music of the lamented Maurice Ravel will welcome this fascinating album.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Thomson: Four Saints in Three Acts. (Sung in English). Beatrice Robinson-Wayne, Inez Matthews (sopranos), Ruby Greene (contralto), Edward Matthews, Randolph Robinson (baritones), Charles Holland, David Bethea (tenors), Altonell Hines (mezzo-soprano), and Abner Dorsey (bass) with double chorus and orchestra conducted by Virgil Thomson. 5-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1244. \$7.25.

When Virgil Thomson's *Four Saints in Three Acts* was first produced in New York during 1934, the theater was filled with people who considered themselves the sophisticates and *avant garde* of their day. Mr. Thomson's work was a cause for them to rejoice and raise their voices in unqualified praise. Others were more guarded, more conservative about this strange and often irritating work.

Employing a typical text by Gertrude Stein—at that epoch a fetish of the so-called intellectuals—Virgil Thomson has written music of considerable charm, consciously oversimplified and of an ecclesiastical nature. This is quite in keeping, for we are told that the subject of *Four Saints in Three Acts* is the religious life.

About half of the musical score is presented here, which, indeed, is quite enough. No matter about the intentions of Miss Stein and Mr. Thomson to communicate "Something of the childlike gaiety and mystical strength of lives devoted in common to a non-materialistic end," one cannot comfortably listen for more than ten record-surfaces to such sentiments as "To know to know to love her so. Four saints prepare for saints. It makes it well fish," and "Why when in lean fairly rejoin place dismiss calls," and "If a magpie in the sky on the sky cannot cry if the pigeon on the grass alas can alas and to pass the pigeon on the grass alas and the magpie in the sky on the sky and to try and to try alas on the grass . . ."

When the work was first given, an excellent Negro cast, under the direction of Alexander Smallens, sang and acted as though they meant every word, which

was quite as it should be. Twice since, *Four Saints* has been broadcast nationally and also revived in concert form, and each time the original cast has been reassembled. We are informed that the cast assembled for this recording is virtually identical with the original one.

If for nothing else, the recording of this work is of interest from an historical point of view, for *Four Saints* was an expression of its era, an incentive for enthusiasm to many people of intellectual and artistically liberal pretensions.

Mr. Thomson is at hand to lead his knowingly-written music. He has been given crystal-clear reproduction on these smooth surfaces.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Wagner: Der Fliegende Holländer—Die Frist ist um (recitative) and Wie oft in Meeres tiefsten Schlund (air) (Act I). One side, and **Wagner: Der Fliegende Holländer**—Dich frage ich (Act I). (Sung in German). Joel Berglund (baritone) and orchestra conducted by Leo Blech. 1-12" disc (V-12-0532). \$1.25.

Rossini: Il Barbiere di Siviglia—Largo al factotum (Act I). One side, and **Leoncavallo: Zaza—Zaza, piccolo zingara** (Act IV). (Sung in Italian). Robert Merrill (baritone) and the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. 1-12" disc (V-12-0450). \$1.25.

Massenet: Manon—Ah! fuyez, douce image (Act III). One side, and **Gounod: Roméo et Juliette**—Ah! lève-toi soleil! (Act II). (Sung in French). Jussi Bjoerling (tenor) and orchestra conducted by Nils Grevillius. 1-12" disc (V-12-0527). \$1.25.

Wagner: Tannhäuser—Da sah ich ihn (Act III, Scene 3). (Sung in German). Set Svanholm (tenor) and RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 1-12" disc (V-12-0528). \$1.25.

Two tenors and two baritones are represented this month on records by RCA Victor. Jussi Bjoerling offers climactic moments from the French repertoire. Aside from clean, fresh voicing of these two arias from Massenet's *Manon* and Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette*, the Swedish tenor communicates little. He realizes neither the despair of Des Grieux nor the ardor of Roméo, and seems mainly preoccupied with the projection of his excellent high notes. His French diction leaves much to be desired.

Set Svanholm adds to his growing list the Rome Narrative from *Tannhäuser*. Though certainly vocally no Melchior, Mr. Svanholm does a good, solid job with this long and demanding scene. His voice is lacking in beauty and sensuous appeal, but it is strong and firm.

Robert Merrill does a very heavy piece of work with the celebrated Largo al Factotum from the

Barber of Seville. The slick, mercurial elegance, the impudent bravado of Figaro is sadly missing here. One feels that Mr. Merrill is taking himself and his singing of this nimble *tour-de-force* far too seriously. If you compare Mr. Merrill's record with a recently issued importation of the same number by Tito Gobbi (V-DB-6626), you will see just where the American baritone's work fails to come off. On the reverse is an aria of much beauty from Leoncavallo's *Zaza* (last heard with Geraldine Farrar in 1922). Mr. Merrill's fundamentally fine voice sounds well here, though it is at times engulfed by Jean Paul Morel's soaring orchestra. Why is it that the average American baritone of today produces such a dark tone that he can practically vie with a basso-cantante for vocal color? Evidently he is taught to look upon himself as a kind of musical fullback. Certainly such baritone voices as De Luca's, Amato's and Stracciani's sound like tenors when compared to the present crop, among whom Mr. Merrill figures.

Joel Berglund's big, heavy voice does an excellent job of the big *scena* from *The Flying Dutchman*—*Die Frist ist Um*. Leo Blech's orchestra is also very exciting. An up-to-date recording of this scene was very desirable and the Berglund-Blech combination is good.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Gomez: Il Gaurany—Gentil di cuore (Act I). One side, and **Gomez: Il Guarany**—C'era un volta un principe (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Bidú Sayão (soprano) with RCA Victor Brasileira Orchestra conducted by G. Giannetti. 1-12" disc (V-DB-2394). \$2.63.

These recordings of selections from Gomez's best-known opera, *Il Guarany*, were made in the composer's native country by the Brazilian RCA Victor Company. The masters found their way to Italy and the present record arrived from there in a recent shipment. Thus we have a record by Miss Sayão with a "La Voce del Padrone" label. Shortly after this fine artist made her appearance with the New York Philharmonic-Symphony in a performance of Debussy's *La Damselle Élue* with Toscanini conducting, Columbia signed her to an exclusive contract and her domestic records have appeared under its label. In addition to the unusualness of this disc, it has real musical value and should appeal to all collectors.

Thomas: Mignon—Adieu, Mignon, courage (Act II). One side, and **Thomas: Mignon**—Elle ne croyait pas (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Giuseppe di Stefano (tenor) and orchestra conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-12" disc (V-12-0529). \$1.25.

Last month we reviewed two imported records by the excellent tenor, Giuseppe di Stefano, and said that "Here is a young Italian tenor to watch!" RCA Victor must have had its eyes open, for this month we find the above disc on its release sheet. No time was lost in pressing it from the foreign masters and

making it generally available to American music lovers. It is a grand disc, and further confirms the high opinion we already had of Sig. Stefano.

Giordano: Fedora—Amor ti vieta (Act II). One side, and **Pietri: Maristella**—Io conosco un giardino. (Sung in Italian). Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Umberto Berrettoni. 1-10" disc (V-DA-5377). \$1.95.

Gigli fans will be glad to know that this little disc has finally reached America. It contains two arias by contemporary Italian composers. Of particular interest is the Pietri selection, because, although that writer of Italian operettas is highly regarded in his native land, he is practically unknown in this country.

Verdi: Rigoletto—Questa o quella (Act I). One side, and **Verdi: Rigoletto**—La donna è mobile (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Luigi Infantino (tenor) and the Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, conducted by Franco Patane. 1-10" disc (C-17557D). \$1.

Luigi Infantino was a great success at Covent Garden last season, and it is easy to see why, when one listens to this record. The recording has been nicely accomplished by English Columbia.

Puccini: La Fanciulla del West—Minnie della mia casa (Act I). One side, and **Mozart: Don Giovanni, K. 527**—Serenata: Deh, vieni alla finestra (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Tito Gobbi (baritone) with orchestra conducted by Umberto Berrettoni. 1-10" disc (V-DA-5430). \$1.95.

Those who are interested in new recordings by the brilliant Italian baritone, Tito Gobbi, will be glad to know that this little disc arrived in a recent shipment from Italy. Reproduction—excellent.

CHORAL



Christmas Carols: St. Peter's (Philadelphia) Choir directed by Harold W. Gilbert. 3-10" discs in album. St. Peter's Set No. 2. \$3.75.

Well-known Christmas carols nicely sung without accompaniment by one of Philadelphia's best male church choirs, consisting of 45 boys and men. The reproduction, while not of the best, is satisfactory. The selections are: *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear*; *Hark, the Herald Angels Sing*; *O Little Town of Bethlehem*; *O Come All Ye Faithful*; *What Child Is This*; and *Silent Night*.

Linek: Pastorella. One side, and **Brixl: Pastoral Motet.** Choir of St. Jacob's Church (Prague); Czechoslovak Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vaclav Smetacek; and Dr. Ladislav Vachulka (organ). 1-12" disc (ME-DM-35). \$1.31.

An unusual choral disc pressed by Mercury from Ultraphone masters imported from Czechoslovakia.

We know nothing of the composer, Linek; Brixl was a composer of religious music who lived in Prague during the 18th century and was at one time organist at St. Gallus.

St. Jacob's Choir is a well-trained group and the music they sing on this record is strange to us but quite interesting. The recording has been faithfully accomplished.

Handel: The Messiah—Hallelujah Chorus. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Luton Choral Society and Special Choir, and Herbert Dawson (organ) conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. One side, and **Handel: The Messiah**—Pastoral Symphony. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (V-12-0584). \$1.25.

Sir Thomas can be counted upon for fine performances of these well-beloved selections from Handel's great oratorio. He does not disappoint us on this record and thus we do not hesitate to recommend it without reservations of any kind.

Fauré: Pavane, Op. 50 (Sung in French). Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 1-12" disc (C-72707D). \$1.25.

One seldom hears this work, and when it is played it is usually without chorus; thus this recording is quite unique. *Pavane* is somber in tone throughout and gives the impression of a dirge. It is lovely in its way but it is definitely on the depressing side. It has been given a splendid performance on this disc and the reproduction is first-rate.

VOCAL



Arias by Isobel Baillie. Isobel Baillie (soprano) with orchestral accompaniments. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-780. \$6.

Handel: *Samson*—Let the bright Seraphim.

Haydn: *The Creation*—With verdure clad.

Bach: *Sheep May Safely Graze* (Cantata No. 208)—Shall pines be the last (recit.); Flocks in pastures green abiding (aria).

Handel: *Rodelinda*—Art thou troubled?

Here is a collection of four well-known oratorio arias by one of England's outstanding sopranos, Isobel Baillie. Miss Baillie, whom record collectors will recall for her fine work in the complete *Elijah* and *Messiah* albums, is now presented in the work of three of the most celebrated 18th century composers—Bach, Handel and Haydn.

Miss Baillie is a stylist with an ice-clear voice. There is in the singer's tone that same disembodied quality one finds in a boy-soprano. Her cold, clean style is apt to get a bit monotonous after extended

listening. Nevertheless, it is a distinct pleasure, in an era not notable either for style or restraint, to hear such refined singing as this.

Miss Baillie does a truly finished bit of work with Haydn's beautiful *In Verdure Clad* from *The Creation*, a difficult aria to sustain with poise and steadiness. Her singing of Bach's *Sheep May Safely Graze* is another conclusive demonstration of this artist's knowledge of music of this kind. *Let the Bright Seraphim* from Handel's *Samson* is a brilliant achievement, and the showy trumpet obbligato is beautifully managed by Arthur Lockwood.

Miss Baillie is accompanied by different orchestras and different conductors in these various arias, showing that they were made at different periods—but the clarity of the recording would suggest that these are all post-war jobs. MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Valente: Passione. One side, and **Valente: Troppo 'Nammurato.** Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Dino Olivieri. 1-10" disc (V-DA-5418). \$1.95.

Bixio: Cinefolia. One side, and **Bixio: Dimmi tu, Primavera.** Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with chorus and orchestra conducted by Luigi Ricci. 1-10" disc (V-DA-5443). \$1.95.

Nardella: Surdate. One side, and **Olivieri: Son Poche Rose.** Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Dino Olivieri. 1-10" disc (V-DA-5419). \$1.95.

Cioffi: Tre Rose. One side, and **Cioffi: 'Na Sera 'E Maggio.** Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Dino Olivieri. 1-10" disc (V-DA-5417). \$1.95.

Buzzi: Lolita. One side, and **Curtis: Maria.** Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Dino Olivieri. 1-10" disc (V-DA-5376). \$1.95.

These five records came in a recent shipment from Italy. They contain a variety of popular selections which the celebrated tenor recorded in 1943. They are all sung in Italian, and for those music lovers who would like to know what tunes have been heard in Italy during the last several years, here is their opportunity. We doubt whether they are of much musical value but they are easy to listen to and typical of the country from which they came. They have been very nicely recorded.

Niles: The Blue Madonna. One side, and **Go 'Way from My Window** (Trad.—arr. Niles). Gladys Swarthout (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by Gibner King (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1456). \$1.

Here is one for the book! In *Go 'Way from My Window*, Miss Swarthout, in her best Metropolitan manner, gives an example of how a folk song should

not be sung. It is hard to keep a straight face during her pseudo-dramatic rendition. Before she sings *The Blue Madonna*, she makes a few introductory remarks that may be interesting the first time one hears them but certainly they will grow pretty stale after a few repetitions. In view of the fact that Miss Swarthout is represented in the RCA Victor catalog by many very excellent recordings, it would seem to us that it would be a wise thing if this fine artist would have the present disc recalled.

Schubert: Der Doppelgänger. One side, and **Schubert: Der Jüngling und der Tod.** (Sung in German). Marian Anderson (contralto) accompanied by Franz Rupp (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0580). \$1.25.

If there were any doubt in our mind, and of course there isn't, about Miss Anderson's being a truly great lieder singer, it would be quickly dispelled after listening to this record. This fine artist has many superb records to her credit but none of greater musical value than the present one.

The domestic catalogs list several recordings of *Der Doppelgänger* but none of *Der Jüngling und der Tod*; thus this fine disc has a special attraction.

Songs of Irving Berlin (arr. King). Risé Stevens (mezzo-soprano) with Orchestra conducted by Dudley King. 3-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-784. \$3.90.

Miss Stevens tries so very hard to put these songs over—she caresses and lingers over every word *ad nauseam*. She outdoes the mushy sentimental style of the singers in the "soft light and sweet music" night spots. A lot of persons may think this is just too, too. We could get along very well without quite so much drippy warbling.

The Irving Berlin numbers in this album are: *Say It With Music*; *How Deep Is the Ocean*; *Always*; *Easter Parade*; *They Say It Is Wonderful*; and *Remember*.

Youmans: Great Day. One side, and **Youmans: More Than You Know.** Allan Jones (tenor) with Ray Sinatra and his Orchestra. 1-10" disc (V-10-1455). \$1.

Two top tunes from the musical play, "Great Day," sung by Allan Jones, who is one of our favorite tenors for such popular selections. One never has any trouble understanding the words when Allan Jones sings a song.

Denza: Occhi di Fata. One side, and **Tosti: 'A Vucchella.** (Sung in Italian). Tito Gobbi (baritone) with orchestral accompaniment. 1-10" disc (V-DA-1887). \$1.95.

Here is another record by Tito Gobbi, the brilliant Italian baritone, who is rapidly becoming popular in this country through his fine recordings. It

contains two songs that are favorites on both sides of the Atlantic.

Larsson: Tills det blir sista gang. One side, and **Peterson-Berger: Böljebj-Vals.** (Sung in Swedish). Gosta Kjellertz (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Christian Thomsen. 1-10" disc (V-X-7307). \$1.42.

Two attractive songs by contemporary Swedish composers; nicely sung by the Swedish tenor, Gosta Kjellertz. Splendidly recorded.

Dunhill: To the Queen of Heaven (Old English Poem). One side, and **MacGimsey: Sweet Little Jesus Boy.** Carol Brice (contralto) accompanied by Jonathan Brice (piano). 1-10" disc (C-17559D). \$1.

Two lovely religious songs—one from Elizabethian England and the other in the tradition of the American Negro—beautifully sung by Carol Brice and nicely recorded by Columbia.

PIANO



Beethoven: Variations on a Waltz by Diabelli, Op. 120. Leonard Shure (piano). 7-12" discs in album. Vox Set 636. \$9.75.

The brilliant American pianist, Leonard Shure, has accomplished a monumental task in recording these thirty-three Diabelli variations, and in so doing has made this great music generally available to the discerning music lover. A recording of this work was made in England a number of years ago by Artur Schnabel and issued in a limited edition by H. M. V.

Mr. Shure gives a performance that calls for high praise, and we are sure that it will be wholly acceptable to most students of Beethoven as well as the general music-loving public. Vox has accomplished a satisfactory recording.

There is quite a story connected with this unusual composition. The publisher, Anton Diabelli, conceived the idea of asking many popular composers of the day each to write a variation upon the theme of a little waltz that he had composed. Among them were Schubert, the child prodigy, the eleven-year-old Franz Liszt, and, of course, the giant of the time, Beethoven. The tale goes that thirty-two composers each sent one variation but nothing was heard from Beethoven. Diabelli got in touch with him, and when Beethoven learned that the publisher had received thirty-two variations from various composers, he said that he would write thirty-three himself, so the present massive work came into being. This story, while interesting, is probably more legend than fact. However, Opus 120 came into being and was published by Diabelli in 1823.

The work is more of academic interest than of

value as a concert selection and is very seldom heard; thus the present recording will be especially welcomed by Beethoven students. Records again prove their great value in the world of music. R.

Chopin: 24 Preludes, Op. 28. Artur Rubinstein (piano). 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1260. \$6.

In 1934 Cortot made recordings of these preludes for Victor and in 1942 Petri made them for Columbia. Neither of these sets is entirely satisfactory. Cortot is quite satisfactory in the smaller and more delicate preludes, but in the more profound ones he seems to miss much of the meat of the music. Petri seems to have a better grasp of these as a whole, but the piano reproduction in many places is not good. Thus the pleasure of listening to his records is spoiled.

It is a most difficult thing to play these twenty-four little pieces one after another because there is no underlying theme running through them. Each is an individual work and requires its own treatment, which is often quite different from the one preceding it. It is our opinion that Rubinstein has been highly successful in this herculean task, and we believe that most music lovers will join us in praising his musicianship.

The reproduction is generally good, but we must say that it is not the best that we have heard.

Falla: El Amor Brujo—Danza ritual del fuego. One side, and **Falla: Canciones Populares españolas—Nana** (Berceuse). Arthur Whittimore and Jack Lowe (duo-pianists). 1-12" disc (V-12-0582). \$1.25.

The very clever two-piano team of Whittimore and Lowe give pleasing renditions of these two well-known Falla selections. Reproduction—excellent.

Fauré: Ballade, Op. 19. Gaby Casadesus (piano) with the Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Manuel Rosenthal. 2-12" discs in album. Vox Set 645. \$5.

Vox has imported these French Polydor discs and is issuing them in its own album as Vox Set 645. This is an interesting item—an early work of Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924), a French composer, who is steadily gaining in favor with American music lovers. The work itself is really a dainty little concerto for piano and orchestra. Because of its simplicity and lack of elaborate development, the composer probably hesitated to call it a concerto and marked it with the simple title "Ballade."

Gaby Casadesus, the wife of the distinguished pianist, Robert Casadesus, and a fine musician in her own right, is an ideal interpreter of this charming work. She is gently but effectively supported by the excellent Lamoureux Orchestra. The reproduction is on the quiet side but highly satisfactory.

Scarlatti: Sonatas. Vladimir Horowitz (piano). 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-1262. \$3.50.

Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757) wrote nearly six hundred sonatas and from this vast group Horowitz has chosen six for this attractive album. The Longo Edition numbers that were selected are: Nos. 25, 27, 33, 209, 430 and 483. All of them are pleasing to listen to and doubtless were written to be enjoyed. So many persons seem to think that music that has lived through the ages must be so profound that it must be approached with an air of awe. Such folks miss so much real pleasure. Scarlatti was probably quite a jolly fellow, and he very likely dashed off these little pieces with the principal thought of the pleasure they would give.

While all of the Scarlatti sonatas were written for the harpsichord, they are suitable for the modern piano, and Horowitz makes them sound mighty attractive.

Encores. First Piano Quartet. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-1263. \$4.75.

If you are one of the many who enjoy recordings by the First Piano Quartet, you will find this album contains a lot of very attractive music. It is just what its title indicates—a group of encore pieces that have proven popular with the audiences of this fine organization. All have been faithfully recorded.

The selections are: *Liebestraum* (Liszt); *In the Hall of the Mountain King* (Grieg); *The Flight of the Bumble Bee* (Rimsky-Korsakoff); *Scherzo in E minor* (Mendelssohn); *Polichinelle* (Villa-Lobos); *Lullaby* (Brahms); *Italian Polka* (Rachmaninoff); *Moment Musical* (Schubert); *The Music Box* (Lia-doff); *Polka* (Shostakovich); and *Rag-Time Bass* (Thomson).

Liszt: Sonata in B minor. Gyorgy Sandor (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-786. \$4.75.

Horowitz made a recording of this unique work for RCA Victor some ten or twelve years ago, but a copy is not presently available for comparison. It is, however, still in the RCA Victor catalog. As we remember it, Horowitz gave a spectacular performance—a much more showy rendition in the grand manner than Mr. Sandor presents on the present discs. It would seem that Sandor has delved more deeply into the music, thus bringing out certain subtleties that other pianists we have heard missed entirely. If this work appeals to you, we doubt whether you are likely to hear a finer performance of it than is found in this new Columbia album.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$9.75.

The Concert Companion. By Robert Bagar and Louis Biancolli with an introduction by Deems Taylor. xi + 868 pp. Whittlesey House (New York). Price \$4.95.

Harold Bauer, His Book. By Harold Bauer. 306 pp. Illustrated. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$3.75.

The Record Book (International Edition). By David Hall. xii + 1394 pp. Oliver Durrell, Inc. (New York). Price \$7.50.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

A Dictionary of Musical Themes. Compiled by Harold Barlow and Sam Morgenstern with an introduction by John Erskine. xiii + 656 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CE—Cetra, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CT—Concertone, D—Decca, DI—Disc, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, HU—Harvard Film Service, HW—Hargall, IRCC—International Record Collector's Club, L—London Gramophone, ME—Mercury, MU—Musicaert, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, OK—Okeh, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Schrimmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, V—Victor, VX—Vox, and W—Woodwind.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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50c per year

The Victor Book of Symphonies. (Revised edition). By Charles O'Connell. xiii+556 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

The first edition of this fine reference book appeared in 1935 and a revised edition in 1941. The general idea was to consider the most important works to be found in the repertory of our symphony orchestras. However, the rapidly growing interest of the American public in orchestral works of all kinds, and the demand for information about them and their composers, made it impractical to cover them all in one volume. Simon and Schuster decided to cover the subject with a series of four volumes. The first book in this series, *Victor Book of Concertos* by Abraham Veinus, in which 130 concertos are considered, was published last summer and was enthusiastically received by music lovers everywhere. The present volume is the second of the series, and the third, devoted to orchestral compositions other than symphonies, such as overtures, symphonic poems, etc., is well under way. The fourth covering the field of the ballet is in preparation.

Mr. O'Connell's present revised edition of his famous book contains notes on 138 symphonies against 49 in his early volume. Thus it is a really comprehensive work; for example, there are 17 Haydn symphonies represented with careful annotations. In fact, the reader will find that very few symphonies which one is likely to hear in the concert hall or over the air have been omitted. This book is arranged alphabetically by composers and each composer is introduced with a brief but highly informative biographical sketch. The first few pages are devoted to Mr. O'Connell's interesting "A Note on the Modern Orchestra," which appeared in the earlier editions, and the last

few pages contain a "Discography," which unfortunately lists only the RCA Victor recordings that are available—we suppose that to retain the name "The Victor Book of the Symphonies," all other recordings had to be disregarded.

Those of us who have been interested in records for a number of years know that Mr. O'Connell is one of our most brilliant writers in the field of music, and that it is a real joy to read his interesting prose, whether he is discussing early Beethoven or present-day Shostakovich. For a pleasant way to learn more about the works that are in the symphonic repertory of our times, this splendid volume is indicated.

* * *

Columbia's new complete 1949 catalog is now ready for distribution. It is a thick one, containing 692 pages. The volume is arranged completely alphabetically, as last year, with composer, artist, and title listings all in the same section. There is an "LP" section listing all of the new Long-Playing records separately, and these listings are not contained in the main body of the catalog. The price is 30c. In ordering a copy from your dealer by mail, you should add 10c to cover partly the postage, as the dealer handles this item without profit.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues published during the last sixteen years are available. The price is 5c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

LP RELEASES FOR DECEMBER 1948

The items listed below were scheduled for release on Columbia's LP Microgroove records in December, 1948. Inasmuch as each item was reviewed previously in THE NEW RECORDS when the shellac pressings

were released, the issue containing this review is given with each listing.

Music of Victor Herbert. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4094). \$4.85. (TNR Sept. '40).

Organ Music of Bach. E. Power Biggs (organ). 1-12" disc (C-ML-4097). \$4.85. (TNR Apr. '48).

Mozart: Concerto in E flat, K. 365 (two pianos and orchestra). Vitya Vronsky and Victor Babin (duo-pianists) with the Robin Hood Dell Orchestra of Philadelphia conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 7 in F for Three Pianos, K. 242.** Rosina Lhevinne, Vitya Vronsky, and Victor Babin (pianos) with The Little Orchestra Society conducted by Thomas K. Scherman. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4098). \$4.85. (TNR Oct. '46, and Nov. '48).

Songs of Stephen Foster. (Vols. I and II). Nelson Eddy (baritone) with chorus and orchestra conducted by Robert Armbruster. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4099). \$4.85. (TNR July '48, and Jan. '49).

Brahms: Concerto No. 1 in D minor, Op. 15. Rudolf Serkin (piano) with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4100). \$4.85. (TNR Feb. '47).

Shostakovich: Symphony No. 1 in F major, Op. 10. Cleveland Orchestra conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4101). \$4.85. (TNR Oct. '41).

Beethoven: Symphony No. 1 in C major, Op. 21. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2027). \$3.85. (TNR Jan. '49).

ORCHESTRA



Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra. Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 6-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-793. \$8.50.

This album contains one of the most important recordings of recent years. Fritz Reiner and Columbia are to be warmly congratulated for their great accomplishment. Music lovers and students everywhere will welcome the opportunity this recording gives of hearing a full-length symphonic work by one of the greatest teachers and composers of our time.

Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra* was composed for the Koussevitzky Music Foundation as a memorial to Natalie Koussevitzky, the wife of its distinguished conductor. It was completed in the autumn of 1943 and was given its first performance during December 1944 by the Boston Symphony. It is in five movements, marked as follows: 1). *Andante non*

troppo; allegro vivace. 2). *Allegro scherzando.* 3). *Elegy; Andante non troppo.* 4). *Intermezzo interrotto: Allegretto.* 5). *Finale: Presto.*

The late composer (Bartók died in New York City in 1945), supplied notes for the first performance of his *Concerto for Orchestra* and in describing the mood of his music said that, except for the lighter second movement, there was "a gradual transition from the sternness of the first movement and the lugubrious death-song of the third, to the life-assertion of the last one." He justified his calling his work a "Concerto" by saying, "The title of this symphony-like orchestral work is explained by its tendency to treat the single instruments and instrument groups in a *concertant* or soloistic manner. The 'virtuoso' treatment appears, for instance, in the *fugato* sections of the development of the first movement (brass instruments) or in the *perpetuum mobile*-like passage of the principal theme in the last movement (strings), and especially in the second movement, in which pairs of instruments consecutively appear with brilliant passages."

It may be that most music lovers will not take to this work at the first few hearings, and that many of them may never learn to like it, but we are very sure that none of them will say that it is dull, repetitious, or uninteresting. Students of pure music will revel in the novelty of its construction; especially erudite ones will get intense enjoyment just from reading the score. It is that sort of music. It is not the sort of music that one may enjoy without using his brain.

We think that we have said enough to indicate whether Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra* is for you or not. R.

Vivaldi: Concerti Grossi, Op. 8 ("Le Quattro Stagioni"). Louis Kaufman (violin), Edouard Nies-Berger (organ), Edith Weiss-Mann (harp-sichord) and the Concert Hall Society String Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 6-12" discs in two albums. Concert Hall Set AR. \$14.70.

The Four Seasons was issued recently in Molinari's edition by Cetra (album 107) and reviewed in our September 1948 bulletin. At that time we gave a brief description of the work, which we will now omit. We should explain, however, that these two recordings differ greatly. Molinari's edition apparently is a transcription of the original work. Vivaldi originally scored it as four violin concertos with string orchestra, and in the present set Louis Kaufman is the violin soloist. Molinari's version is of the concerto grosso style, using no soloist. Both use organ and cembalo or harpsichord with the ensemble. The elaborate notes which accompany each set do not go too thoroughly into the original scoring and the scoring used at this time; but with the limited material at hand we believe the essential differences are as we have stated them. Therefore the choice

rests with the purchaser as to whether he prefers a solo violin or not.

Both performances breathe sincerity by the performers. Swoboda, a man of vast continental experience, in addition to being a good match for Molinari has a slightly better group of musicians as far as accuracy is concerned. Kaufman, of course, plays with technical ease and brilliance; he is quite remarkable for his varying styles—the oldest to the most difficult contemporary works. Molinari imparts more atmosphere and antiquity to the work, and is aided by less harsh reproduction. The Concert Hall set is as sharp as a razor tonally. Obviously, anyone interested in acquiring this unusual work will do well to investigate both versions. For those who want the reviewer to name a choice so they may order "sound unheard" we suggest the Cetra set with Molinari as being more likely to please, as well as being less expensive by several dollars (it is shellac; Concert Hall is vinylite). S.

Bax: The Garden of Fand. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 2-12" discs (V-DB-6654 and V-DB-6655) (manual sequence). \$5.25.

From the note that is printed in the score we learn that "The Garden of Fand is the sea," and that "In the earlier portion of the work the composer seeks to create the atmosphere of an enchanted Atlantic completely calm beneath the spell of the Other World. Upon its surface floats a small ship adventuring towards the sunset from the shores of Eirinn, as St. Brendan and the sons of O'Corra are said to have sailed in later times. The little craft is borne on beneath a sky of pearl and amethyst until, on the crest of an immense slowly surging wave, it is tossed on to the shore of Fand's miraculous Island. Here is human revelry unceasing between the ends of time, and the voyagers are caught away, unresistingly, into the maze of the dance. A pause comes, and Fand sings her song of immortal love enchainning the hearts of the hearers forever. The dancing and feasting begin again, and finally the sea, rising suddenly, overwhelms the whole island, the immortals riding in rapture on the green and golden waves, and laughing carelessly amidst the foam at the fate of the over-rash mortals lost in the depths. Twilight falls, the sea subsides, and Fand's garden fades out of sight."

With this romantic tale in mind, Bax proceeds to picture it in music and succeeds in writing as charming a piece as one will come across in many a long day. Mystical music of a legendary character, it is a real relief from much of the hard and practical music that so many of our present-day composers are offering us. We found it most enjoyable and it helped to carry our thoughts away from the bitter turmoil that is everywhere about us.

We can think of no conductor better qualified to interpret this music than Sir Thomas Beecham and

we were certainly pleased to find his name upon the labels of these records. This recording was made under the auspices of the British Council and thus it must be given credit for making another fine work available—one that probably would not have been if it were not for the aid given by that unique organization. R.

Mendelssohn: Midsummer Night's Dream—Incidental Music. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1280. \$6.

If it is possible for eight record sides to contain more wonderful music than the *Midsummer Night's Dream* music, we have yet to find it. One of our prime favorites of long standing, this beguiling music always caresses the ears with spontaneity and freshness. Our only hope is for a complete recording of the entire thirteen sections some day by an enterprising outfit.

The notorious scandal of the unissued recordings by Toscanini and the Philadelphia Orchestra is by now familiar to most phonophiles (see O'Connell's "The Other Side of the Record"). One of the many choice works in that ill-fated session was the *Midsummer Night's Dream* music. As in the case of the Schubert *C major Symphony* he has made it over with the NBC Orchestra. Well, it's Toscanini, but alas, not the Philadelphia Orchestra (in the Academy's acoustics). The present set has much magic in it, and, except for a few of us sentimental souls, should answer the purpose 100 percent. It is truly a beautiful accomplishment. The six best sections are represented: Overture, Intermezzo, Nocturne, Scherzo, Wedding March, and Finale. The Overture is three sides, the others one side each. The Finale employs a women's chorus and a solo soprano. This set is obviously preferable to Rodzinski's, admirable as his is (Col. MM-504), and no others are in the running (except Furtwangler's antique reproduction of the Overture which is without parallel). The reproduction accorded Toscanini is very fine, surfaces of our set quiet. Here is something to treasure; you couldn't make a better investment in lovely music. S.

Alfano: Symphony No. 2 in C major. E. I. A. R. Symphony Orchestra conducted by F. Previtali. 4-12" discs in album. Cetra Set No. 11 (manual sequence). \$11.50.

The composer of this symphony is principally known for completing Giacomo Puccini's *Turandot* after that composer's death in 1924. This is rather ironic, for Alfano is in his own right the composer of several operas, including *Madonna Imperia*, which was given at the Metropolitan on Feb. 8, 1928, and *Resurrection*, with libretto based on Tolstoi, which enjoyed considerable success in this country when revived for Mary Garden.

Franco Alfano was born in Posillipo, near Naples,

on March 8, 1876. He was trained at the Naples Conservatory and is still living in his native country.

Alfano is not noted as a composer of symphonic music, and so this symphony, which was composed in 1933, may come as a surprise to many.

It is a pleasant composition, obviously the work of a man of the theater. The opening *allegro* is very fully scored and gay in character, but little, when all is said and done, is accomplished or established. The second movement contains a broad and expansive singing melody which is neither original in theme or treatment. The final march is quite exciting and expertly scored.

However, this music is not much more than merely pleasant to listen to. Despite some grandiose theatrical effects it is fundamentally poor in thematic material. The recording seems to favor a preponderance of bass, but the performance under *maestro* Previtali is quite good.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Music for Films. Queens Hall Light Orchestra conducted by Charles Williams, and The Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Ernest Irving. 3-12" discs in album, Columbia Set MM-794. \$4.75.

This album doubtless rates more space than we can give it, however, Morris Hastings has written some excellent notes for it; these will be found on the inside cover of the album and we suggest that those persons interested refer to them.

In this group of recordings will be found some very much worthwhile music that has been composed for various films. All but one are English films; the exception is "Spellbound," which is represented by the theme from the "Concerto." The English pictures from which excerpts from the scores have been recorded are: "Stairway to Heaven," "This Man is Mine," "Wanted for Murder" and "The Loves of Joanna Godden."

Amateur movie makers will likely find some appropriate mood music in this unusual album.

Roussel: Le Festin de l'Araignée, Op. 17—Fragments Symphoniques. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-44. \$5.25.

The Spider's Banquet was previously recorded by Straram (Col. MX-23) but has been deleted and unavailable for some time. It is worthy of a place in the catalogs and is therefore very welcome. This engaging score has much to recommend it. The subject material, an insect ballet, is treated with great skill by Roussel, an exceedingly clever composer of the modern French school (he died in 1937 at the age of sixty-eight). Difficult to describe, there is something about the music which is appealing.

Just a year ago we reviewed Roussel's *Petite Suite, Op. 39* (EDA-37), also done by Münch. Again, his

performance is a model. *The Spider's Banquet* is ever so carefully colored by Münch, who substantiates the general rule that French conductors have a unique touch with French music, particularly the romantic and the modern schools. This set is even finer than Straram's, aided greatly by the Decca full frequency reproduction. Decca is to be roundly condemned, however, for failing to include program notes with most of their EDA series albums. In the present set they even fail to mention the movements on the record labels. Such colorful titles as *Prelude, Entry of the Ants, Dance and Death of the Butterfly, Birth and Dance of the Day-Fly, and Funeral of the Day-Fly* would surely enhance anyone's enjoyment of the music. And while we're carping, the album also has an unimaginative cover decoration. But these trifles aside, the music is what counts, and here it is performed and recorded beautifully. For those unfamiliar with it, we add that it is not hard to understand or grasp—it will appeal on first hearing.

S.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 1 in C major, Op. 21. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-796. \$6. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-10" disc (C-ML-2027). \$3.85.

With this recording Bruno Walter has recorded for Columbia all of the Beethoven Symphonies except the Second, Fourth and Ninth. He will probably get around to these three in time; we hope so for he is surely a great interpreter of Beethoven and a complete set of the symphonies under his distinguished direction would be an asset to any library.

Numerous recordings of this early Beethoven symphony, which is said to be a bridge between the symphonies of Haydn and Mozart and the later works in this form of Beethoven, have been issued. However, we feel that Mr. Walter has nothing to fear from the competition of the earlier recordings. His version may not be preferred by all music lovers but he will secure the vote of a goodly number of them.

Dvorák: Symphony No. 5, in E minor, Op. 95 ("From the New World"). Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. 5-12" discs in album, RCA Victor Set DM-1248. \$7.25. Vinylite, DV-25, \$11.

Why another recording of Dvorák's Fifth Symphony by Stokowski, when there are two other of his recorded versions presently available, we wouldn't know. Perhaps this symphony is a very special favorite of Mr. Stokowski. It would seem so because he recorded it with the Philadelphia Orchestra for Victor and with the All-American Orchestra for Columbia.

The present recording is an excellent one and will rate well with the numerous others that are listed in the various catalogs. Our point is that Mr.

Stokowski is an able and versatile musician and surely he could pick out some work that needs recording and thus make a valuable addition to the repertory of recorded music.

Haydn: Symphony No. 88 in G minor (B. & H. No. 13). Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-803. \$4.75.

Some ten years ago, with considerable fanfare, RCA Victor announced Toscanini's recording of this lovely little symphony—the first recording of the N.B.C. Symphony with Toscanini conducting. It was greeted with enthusiasm by record collectors and has enjoyed a steady sale ever since. Now we have this new version by the Philadelphia Orchestra under Ormandy and it is our opinion that those who have the older recording will not wish to put it aside for the newer one. However, those who do not have this item in their libraries now have the opportunity of two fine versions from which to make a choice.

Beethoven: Egmont Overture, Op. 84. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Alceo Galliera. 1-12" disc (C-72747D). \$1.25.

Beethoven: Egmont Overture, Op. 84. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 1-12" disc (V-12-0288). \$1.31.

There are at least a dozen available recordings of this popular concert selection and now we have two more. Certainly the most finicky music lover can find one that just suits his taste. Of the two new ones, we would choose the Koussevitzky version—it costs six cents more and is worth it.

Curzon: The Boulevardier. One side, and **Benjamin**—arr. Richardson: **Jamaican Rumba.** Queens Hall Light Orchestra conducted by Sidney Torch. 1-10" disc (C-17561D). \$1.

These two selections are ones that would likely be popular with Boston "Pops" audiences; they go big with such groups of music lovers in England.

Mendelssohn: Ruy Blas—Overture, Op. 95. San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 1-12" disc (V-12-0657). \$1.31.

Several fine recordings of this brilliant overture have been made but we rather feel that Monteux's version will rate well with any of them. In our opinion, he has an edge on all of them.

Reginald Kell and his Quiet Music. Orchestra conducted by Reginald Kell. 3-10" discs in album. London Set LA-38. \$3.94.

Reginald Kell, the celebrated English clarinetist, has assembled a small group of string players who join him in producing this lovely music—as restful and pleasing music as we have heard in many a long day—just the type for relaxing before turning in for the night.

The pieces that Mr. Kell has selected for this album are: *In the Gloaming*; *The Gentle Maiden*; *Killarney*; *Some Folks Do*; *Gentle Annie*; and *Has Sorrow Thy Young Days Shaded*.

Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 1 in F minor. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (C-12928D). \$1.25.

If you liked Ormandy's rendition of the famous Second Hungarian Rhapsody, and, judging from the immense sale of that item a great many persons did, you'll surely be interested in this disc recently released by Columbia.

March Rhythms. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Julius Harrison. 2-12" discs in album. London Set LA-45. \$5.25.

As there is always a demand for good march records, this fine London album should enjoy a wide popularity. The selections chosen are excellent and Julius Harrison directs the London Philharmonic in some thrilling performances. Add full-range recording and you have a set of discs that calls for high praise.

The selections in this album are: *Marche Militaire Française (Saint-Saëns)*; *Entry of the Boyars (Halvorsen)*; *Coronation March (Meyerbeer)*; and *Imperial March (Elgar)*.

Debussy: Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un Faune. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (C-12917D). \$1.25.

Of the ten or twelve recorded versions of this lovely music that are presently available we would probably choose this new one by the world-famous Philadelphia Orchestra. Ormandy has given it the delicate and mystic touch that it requires.

CONCERTO

Beethoven: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra in E flat (1784). Orazio Frugoni (piano) with the Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra conducted by Paul Paray. 3-12" discs in album, Vox Set No. 647. \$7.

The authentic piano concerto here performed was composed when Beethoven was fourteen years old, in 1784. This work has been known since 1890. The only existing score was a piano condensation on which there were indications of the scoring for the orchestral tutti, the original orchestral parts being lost. A reconstructed version was published in 1943. The concerto's authenticity is put beyond question by a series of minor changes that the young Beethoven wrote on the piano score, presumably after a trial performance, in a handwriting that has been reliably proved to be his. The indications of scoring are quite profuse and specific on the piano reduction which is the only source. The score, as well as the style of the music, calls for a simple chamber group, a foun-



dation of strings, plus pairs of horns and flutes, definitely indicated by Beethoven. The principal points of controversy that the reconstructers had to settle were minor ones.

Born in Switzerland in 1921 of Italian parents, Orazio Frugoni has been residing in the United States since October 1947. Paul Paray is a well known conductor of many years' standing. This recording is of recent vintage, made in France by Polydor, and is excellent both in reproduction and in surfaces. The value of this set is hardly for the quality of the concerto itself, which is obviously immature; but it is no less a remarkable thing when one considers Beethoven's age at the time he composed it. There are many points of interest in it (ably pointed out in Canby's accompanying notes), and time and again is heard the unmistakable Beethoven of later years. For many this choice first recording is a must; however, everybody should at least hear it for curiosity's sake.

S.

Cimarosa—arr. Benjamin: **Concerto for Oboe and Strings**. Mitchell Miller (oboe) and the Saidenberg Little Symphony conducted by Daniel Saidenberg. 2-10" discs in album. Mercury Set DM-6. \$2.88.

Within this little album one will find as lovely a piece as one is likely to hear in many a long day. The distinguished composer, conductor and pianist, Arthur Benjamin, has arranged this charming concerto from keyboard sonatas by the celebrated 18th century Italian composer, Domenico Cimarosa (1749-1801). Cimarosa is best remembered for his operas buffa, the most famous of which was *Il matrimonio segreto*.

The present concerto was introduced in the United States by the artists who made these records at a concert at New York Times Hall on February 21, 1944. It was received with considerable enthusiasm and we are very glad that Mercury arranged to record it just as it was presented at that concert. Mitchell Miller is a fine artist and he is superbly supported by the Saidenberg Little Symphony under the direction of its brilliant conductor, Daniel Saidenberg. The reproduction has been most successfully accomplished.

Several years ago, a recording of this concerto was made in England by Leon Goossens (oboe) and the Liverpool Philharmonic under Malcolm Sargent. We don't recall ever having heard that earlier version.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Beethoven: Septet in E flat major, Op. 20. Pro Musica Chamber Group. 4-12" discs in album. Vox Set 646. \$9.

Beethoven's Septet for violin, viola, violoncello, string bass, clarinet, horn and bassoon, composed before 1800, has enjoyed considerable popularity. It is recorded that it was well-liked by the public at the

very first performance. Theodore Thomas writes that it is the "connecting link between the lesser and greater forms of his (Beethoven's) compositions. Meaning here by the word 'greater' those written for large bodies of performers. Hitherto, his instrumental works had been composed either for piano, or for small groups of strings—trios, quartets, etc."

In six movements, none of them of excessive length, the work nevertheless seems too long; at least, interest tends to wane before the finish is in sight. The writing is deft and accomplished, the various instruments are combined and contrasted in odd and unexpected ways, and there are some charming tunes and effects; but the desire to hear the whole thing at one sitting is lacking. Perhaps a couple of movements at a time is the proper method. Thus heard, they give much pleasure.

It has been ten years since a recording of this work has been made and so the present French Polydor version (issued by Vox) is very welcome. The performance is masterly and the reproduction of high calibre.

R.

Hindemith: Quartet in E-flat (1943). Budapest String Quartet. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-797. \$4.75.

Those interested in modern music will be delighted to know that the Budapest Quartet has made a recording of Hindemith's *Quartet in E flat* which he composed in this country in 1943. We have been looking for a recording of this interesting work and it was our hope that the Budapest players would be the artists who would make it. We are highly pleased and entirely satisfied with both the performance and the reproduction. We believe that our readers after they have heard these discs will join us in our praise of this album.

This work is in the usual four movements and the composer has marked them as follows: the first is marked *very quiet and expressive*; the second, *lively and very energetic*; the third, *Variations (quiet)* and the fourth, *broad and energetic*. On first hearing this music may sound quite strange, especially to those who are not familiar with the works of this very great modern composer, but don't dismiss it with a single hearing, saying this is just another queer piece. We can assure you that it isn't. It is well worth serious consideration. There is much beauty in it for those who will make the effort to appreciate it.

R.

Delius: Sonata No. 1 for Violin and Piano. Louis Kaufman (violin) and Theodore Saidenberg (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Concert Hall Set AO. \$5.25.

Louis Kaufman and Concert Hall are to be congratulated for making available this charming little work of Delius. It has been splendidly accomplished—the performance is excellent and the reproduction is first-rate.

It changes key so often that the composer has not given it a signature; and as it is really a piece for violin with piano accompaniment (the accompaniment is of quite secondary importance), it is said that Delius called it a sonata *with* piano rather than a sonata for violin *and* piano. It is in two sections; the first is marked "With easy movement but not quick" and the second "With vigour and animation." For anyone in the mood for Delius music, it is not hard to get acquainted with and should hold much charm for the listener. If you are not familiar with this unusual English composer, this sonata should be a reasonably pleasant introduction.

Baroque Trio Sonatas. Alfred Mann (recorder), Ernest White (organ), Lois Wann (oboe), and Edith Weiss-Mann (cembalo). 4-10" discs in album. Technichord Set T-13. \$5.85.

Loeillet: *Trio Sonata in D minor* (recorder, oboe, and cembalo).

Telemann: *Trio Sonata in E minor—Affettuoso* (recorder, oboe, and cembalo).

Telemann: *Trio Sonata for Recorder, Cembalo and Organ.*

Another interesting album by Technichord, containing music of the early 18th century Flemish composer Jean-Baptiste Loeillet, and the friend and contemporary of Bach, the much better-known German composer Georg Philipp Telemann. A group of outstanding artists in the field of Baroque music has been secured for these recordings, which were made in the New York studio of Mr. White at the Church of Saint Mary the Virgin. The results are excellent both from a purely musical standpoint and technically as well. If music of this character appeals to you, you will find this album of supreme interest.

A most informative booklet is included with this album. In addition to the notes on the composers and artists, it contains the full musical scores for Loeillet's *Trio Sonata in D minor*, which occupies three record-sides, and Telemann's *Trio Sonata for Recorder, Cembalo and Organ*, which occupies four sides.

Rachmaninoff: Sonata in G minor, Op. 19. Edmund Kurtz (violoncello) and William Kapell (piano). 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1261. \$6.

We rather believe that very few of our readers will be familiar with this really very beautiful Rachmaninoff work because it is so seldom played and no other recording of it is available—at least we do not know of any. It is typical of the composer and its soulful third movement is among the loveliest bits of music to come from Rachmaninoff's pen. Discerning music lovers will do well to investigate this fine album.

Edmund Kurtz, well supported by the able pianist, William Kapell, gives a performance that calls for high praise. Reproduction—excellent.

OPERA



Verdi Duets. (Sung in Italian). Daniza Ilitsch (soprano), Kurt Baum and Richard Tucker (tenors), with the Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Association conducted by Max Rudolf. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-798. \$6.

Aida—Pur ti reveggo (Act III).

Aida—Sovra una terra estrania (Act III).

Aida—O terra, addio (Act IV).

Il Trovatore—Miserere: Ah! che la morte ognora (Act IV).

Un Ballo in Maschera—Teco io sto (Act II).

Un Ballo in Maschera—M'ami, m'ami (Act II).

Otello—Gia nella notte denza (Act I).

Otello—Ed io vedea fra le tue tempie (Act I).

It is a very long time since these Verdi duets have been recorded domestically. It is therefore self-evident how much needed and how important this release is.

Only the *Miserere* has been honored with up-to-date technique by our recording companies, when RCA Victor issued the Milanov-Peerce version of this familiar scene a few years ago.

Passages from *Otello*, *Aida* and the *Ballo in Maschera*, such as Columbia has handled here, are among Verdi's most important pages and therefore among the glories of Italian opera.

In the old days, both Victor and Columbia catalogs were full of such selections recorded by the great artists of the day: Caruso, Destinn, Zenatello, Homer, Farrar, Gadske, Amato, *et al*, but of late years output of this type of record has been skimpy indeed, attention being devoted almost exclusively to the operatic solo.

Columbia has done a generally good job. It employs the Yugoslav soprano, Daniza Ilitsch throughout. The prima donna enjoys the partnership of two tenors—Kurt Baum for the *Aida* and *Trovatore* selections, and Richard Tucker for the *Otello* and *Ballo* excerpts.

Mme. Ilitsch, who appeared for two seasons at the Metropolitan, and shared with Stella Roman the heavier roles of the Italian repertoire, has a solid, dark voice of impressive power and texture. She is also the possessor of a big temperament as the *Nile Scene* records will attest. This is the debut on records of a singer who was so erratic at the Metropolitan last season that she failed to secure a re-engagement this year. Fortunately, here we find the soprano at her best, and her best is indeed worth listening to.

Both Mr. Baum and Mr. Tucker fare excellently. They are competent, fresh-voiced tenors with vocal assets that keep them where they rightly belong—at the Metropolitan.

The Metropolitan Opera House orchestra under the direction of Max Rudolph knows its way around in music of this type. All in all, Columbia should receive thanks for a job that has been far too long neglected.

Reproduction is A-1; surfaces vary from good to disappointingly noisy. MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Massenet: Manon—Le Rêve: C'est vrail (Act II). One side, and **Massenet: Werther**—Lied d'Ossian: Pourquoi me réveiller? (Act III). (Sung in French). Ferruccio Tagliavini (tenor) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. 1-12" disc (V-12-0659). \$1.31.

The release of a new record by Tagliavini is always an occasion of importance and the issuance of the present disc is no exception. He presents these two Massenet arias in a beautiful manner and we feel sure that they will be welcomed by his host of admirers in this country.

Flotow: Martha—M'appari tutt' amor (Act III). One side, and **Donizetti: La Favorita**—Romanza: Spirto gentil (Act IV). (Sung in Italian). Enrico Caruso (tenor) with orchestral accompaniment. 1-12" disc (V-15-1036). \$2.63.

Donizetti: Don Sebastiano—In terra solo. One side, and **Meyerbeer: Les Huguenots**—Plus blanche que le blanche hermine (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Enrico Caruso (tenor) with orchestral accompaniment. 1-12" disc (V-15-1037). \$2.63.

Leoncavallo: La Bohème—Io non ho che una povera stanzetta. One side, and **Verdi: Macbeth**—Ah! la paterna mano. (Sung in Italian). Enrico Caruso (tenor) with orchestral accompaniment. 1-12" disc (V-15-1038). \$2.63.

Saint-Saëns: Samson et Dalila—Vois ma misère, hélas! (Act II). One side, and **Rubinstein: Nero**—Ah, mon sort. (Sung in French). Enrico Caruso (tenor) with orchestral accompaniment. 1-12" disc (V-15-1039). \$2.63.

Rossini: La Danza (Taratella Napolitana). (Sung in Italian). One side, and **Fenesta che lucive** (Neapolitan Song). (Sung in Neapolitan). Enrico Caruso (tenor) with orchestral accompaniment. 1-12" disc (V-15-1040). \$2.63.

RCA Victor's Heritage Series, which has been dormant since last June, now comes forth with its seventh issue—an issue of great importance, as it features the voice of the man, who, as far as we know, was the possessor of the greatest tenor voice of all time—Enrico Caruso.

Caruso's voice underwent changes during his career, which we might divide into three periods. From 1900 through 1907 he was a purely lyric tenor; from 1907 through 1914 his voice darkened and grew in power until it was a *lirico spinto*, and from 1914 until his death in 1921, he evolved into a dra-

matic tenor of almost baritone richness.

All three of these phases of Caruso's art are represented in these ten selections, and RCA Victor is to be warmly congratulated on offering some of Caruso's less known records, such as the selections from *Don Sebastiano*, *Macbeth*, *Nero*, *Samson et Dalila*, and Leoncavallo's *Bohème*.

The earliest are those from *Marta* and *Favorita*, which were recorded on the same day in 1906. These show the tenor's unmatched beauty and transparency of voice, and the breath-control, which at that period permitted him to take entire phrases in one breath. Though *M'appari* has been recorded scores of times during the ensuing 42 years, it is safe to say that Caruso's 1906 recording of the aria has never been remotely approached. In *Spirto gentil* the velvety legato shows clearly why Caruso's voice still occupies its unique position among what are merely "other tenors."

Next, chronologically speaking, are the selections from *Don Sebastiano* (1908) and *Les Huguenots* (1909). Here again you will find qualities that are hard to believe, for Caruso's was the easiest voice to record, and took to the horn like a duck to water. What a pity that electrical recording did not exist in his day! Nevertheless, even though the orchestra sounds thin and outmoded, the great tenor's voice reproduces splendidly in all these selections.

The aria from Leoncavallo's *La Bohème* (an opera that was never able to make the grade because of the overwhelming success of Puccini's version) is not at all familiar. However, it is a melodiously beautiful selection, and Caruso's glowing tones and ardent style (1911) now proclaim him a true *lirico spinto*.

So do the two Neapolitan songs, *Fenesta che lucive* and the Pepoli-Rossini Tarantella, *La Danza*. These were recorded in 1913 and 1912, respectively, and without their inclusion in this list, a re-issue of Caruso's art would remain incomplete. His singing of the songs of his native city was simply unforgettable in its warmth and generous outpouring of voice, and that quality we call "heart."

Caruso as a dramatic tenor, a mature artist of repose and dignity, is exemplified by the selections from *Macbeth* (1916), *Samson et Dalila* (1916) and *Nero* (1917). Here you will find a new use of a richly dark half-voice, and the breadth and authority of a great artist whose life had been dedicated to singing. Unforgettable is the beauty of Caruso's final phrases in *Samson* . . . "A tes pieds, brisé, mais soumis . . ." The aria from Rubinstein's *Nero* is interesting and requires impeccably sustained tone for its Gluck-like melody over a rippling harp accompaniment.

It is nice to think of Caruso's matchless tones on unbreakable Vinylite, for the instinct of those of us who heard the great tenor is to preserve for all time what may easily have been the most wonderful natural voice the world has ever known.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Donizetti: La Favorita—Fia dunque vero (recit.) and O mio Fernando (aria) (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Ebe Stignani (mezzo-soprano) with the Symphony Orchestra of the Augusteo, Rome, conducted by Vincenzo Bellezza, 1-12" disc (C-72727D). \$1.25.

Ebe Stignani is continually growing in favor with the opera fans in this country and the present disc, which displays Miss Stignani's talents to great advantage, should have a wide appeal. Nan Merriman made a recording of this selection for RCA Victor just about a year ago and it met with reasonable success considering that it is from an opera that is not particularly well-known.



CHORAL

Brahms: Alto Rhapsody, Op. 53. Kathleen Ferrier (contralto) with The London Philharmonic Orchestra and Choir conducted by Clemens Krauss. 2-12" discs in album, Decca Set EDA-69. \$5.25.

From England on Decca's *ffrr* records comes Kathleen Ferrier, the noted British contralto, supported by a chorus and the London Philharmonic under Clemens Krauss, to challenge comparison with Marian Anderson and Pierre Monteux in Brahms' sombre and beautiful *Alto Rhapsody*.

Curiously enough, Miss Ferrier's voice bears a marked resemblance to Miss Anderson's in its bright, fluid quality and in its ability to sustain the vocal line. Miss Ferrier's scale, however, is better equalized than the American singer's. On the other hand, she lacks some of the simplicity and spiritual conviction of the latter.

The new recording is excellently achieved, the balance between soloist, orchestra and chorus being altogether admirable. Perhaps from a purely reproduction point-of-view, this is the best recording ever made of one of Brahms' greatest achievements.

Miss Ferrier sounds better in this music than anything she has yet placed on record surfaces. Her voice is delightfully fresh and clear; her tones are uniformly steady.

It is quite apparent that Clemens Krauss knows his Brahms, and the recording from many stand-points is eminently desirable.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Handel: Messiah—Hallelujah Chorus. One side, and **Handel: Messiah**—Amen Chorus, Huddersfield Choral Society and The Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 1-12" disc (C-72733D). \$1.25.

These parts were selected from Columbia's complete recording of Handel's *Messiah* by the Huddersfield Choral Society which has met with such great success with music lovers on this side of the Atlantic. If you would like recordings of these two popular selections from perhaps the greatest of all oratorios,

you will find the present disc highly satisfactory we are quite sure.

VOCAL

Bach: Arias (Vol. II). Bach Aria Group directed by William H. Scheide. 3-10" discs in album. Vox Set 654. \$3.93.

In July when we reviewed Volume I of this Bach Aria Group series, we said, "We sincerely hope that there will be others to follow because this collection of hitherto unrecorded Bach arias excited us greatly." We are pleased, therefore, to be able to announce that Volume II is now available.

In the notes which accompany the set Mr. Scheide apologizes for the group: "No one knows really how this music was performed since no group has made a practice of performing it intensively since Bach's time . . ." However, no apology is needed; the group performs easily as well as they did in Volume I—if not better—and we feel that there must be other Bach fans besides ourself who will hasten to their dealers to secure their copy. The surfaces are of the same high caliber as Volume I—an innovation for Vox.

The arias contained in Volume II are as follows: *Cantata No. 97*—Ihm hab' ich mich ergeben . . . ; *Cantata No. 42*—Jesus ist ein schild der steinen . . . ; *Cantata No. 66*—Ich fürchte zwar . . . ; and *Mass in A major*—Qui tollis peccata mundi.

Songs of Stephen Foster (Vol. II). Nelson Eddy (baritone) with chorus and orchestra conducted by Robert Armbruster. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-795. \$6. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (C-ML-4099). \$4.85.

Some time ago Columbia issued the first volume of "Songs of Stephen Foster" by Nelson Eddy. It met with considerable success and thus the second volume was recently announced. It contains eighteen more Foster songs, including among the better known ones: *Old Folks at Home*; *Beautiful Dreamer*; *Massa's in de Cold, Cold Ground*; *Nellie Was a Lady*; and *Old Dog Tray*.

If you liked the first volume you will surely like this one.

Romance. Jane Powell (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Carmen Dragon. 3-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-788. \$3.90.

When Columbia announced Miss Powell's album, it did so in the manner quoted below. We give it to you just as it came to us, for we think it is too precious to disturb—a real masterpiece of blurb—we hope you'll enjoy it.

"Janie Powell, who admits that she is very much in love with love, offers her version of a group of songs redolent of romance at its most lyric and most

appealing. Little Miss Powell, ninety-eight pounds of charm and musical talent, has selected five songs from as many operettas, plus the glowing *Springtide* by Grieg, as her contribution to the romantic mood. From the Victor Herbert success of the 1900's, she sings, *Kiss Me Again*, first sung by the ebullient Fritzi Scheff. From 'The New Moon' she has chosen the appealing *Lover Come Back to Me*. One of Romberg's most touching melodies, *Will You Remember?* Vincent Youmans' *Through the Years* and Victor Herbert's *A Kiss in the Dark* complete the album—a fragrant musical bouquet by the most popular teenage singer in the land."

A'Barcillunisa (Sicilian Folk Song). One side, and **Cantu a Timuni** (Sicilian Folk Song). Giuseppe di Stefano (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-10" disc (V-10-1461). \$1.05.

This item was reviewed in the November 1948 issue of THE NEW RECORDS when the imported version was received. We praised Signor di Stefano then, and we are, needless to say, more than happy to note that RCA Victor apparently agrees with us as evidenced by its releasing this disc under its own label.

PIANO



Rachmaninoff: Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Op. 43. Artur Schnabel (piano) and The Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Susskind. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1269. \$4.75.

(This annotation is reprinted from the October 1948 issue. It appeared in this place when the imported recording of this work was reviewed.)

Rachmaninoff composed this work during the summer of 1934, while on vacation in Switzerland, and it was promptly given its first performance at a concert of the Philadelphia Orchestra directed by Stokowski with the composer at the piano in Baltimore on November 7, 1934. Less than six months after its initial performance, Victor released its famous recording of it with the same combination of artists. This recorded version enjoyed wide popularity and has had reasonable sales right down to the present, although a modern recording of it was made by Moisevitich and the London Philharmonic conducted by Basil Cameron in 1942. And now we have this spectacular recording by Rubinstein—we say spectacular because we don't know when we have heard such lifelike reproduction. It would seem that H.M.V., spurred on by the acclaim given to English Decca's *ffrr* reproduction, has improved its recording technique; it would seem that *ffrr* has at least been equalled—perhaps bettered by a shadow. With a good phonograph and these discs, one has a concert grand piano right in his living room—and he doesn't have to use his imagination much, either. To us this recording was startling. We suggest that

those persons who are particularly interested in the development of the recording art listen to these discs on a high fidelity reproducing instrument.

In addition to superb reproduction, this album contains some fine music, for Rubinstein gives a brilliant performance and is ably supported by a very good British orchestra under the able conductor, Walter Susskind. R.

Schumann: Etudes Symphoniques, Op. 13. Alexander Brailowsky (piano). 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1272. \$4.75.

For those who know this work, we can state that Brailowsky's performance is the choice of the domestic issues, the only other one being Kilkenyi's unimaginative rendition (Col. MX-162). On good advice we are told it is preferable also to Cortot's recording (deleted). The Paul Baumgartner set of imported records we have not heard, although it is supposed to be excellent. The reproduction is good in the present set.

To those who do not know the *Symphonic Etudes*, here is a brief explanation. It is a series of variations, based on a theme supposedly "by an amateur." The author of the theme was a Baron von Fricken, whose daughter Ernestine was a fellow pupil of Schumann in Wieck's classes (as well as one of his youthful romances). After the introduction or theme follows the eleven variations and then a lengthy epilogue. At least two of the variations are not variations at all, but independent compositions in themselves and bear no relation to the main theme. Several of the variations give only an occasional nod to the theme; there is nothing especially academic about this set of etudes. The finale barely mentions the original theme; Schumann makes greater use of an operatic theme to build this section. The work is considered one of Schumann's most important piano compositions and shows great technical exploration. It is supposed to have a program, but the program is unknown and everyone dutifully agrees that the program is unnecessary for full enjoyment of the music. However, we suggest those unfamiliar with the work hear it before purchasing, for your enjoyment will not be boundless unless you are fond of this romantic type of piano music. Pianists, students, and other followers of the art will find Brailowsky's *Etudes* gratifying. S.

Chopin: Andante Spianato and Grande Polonaise in E flat major, Op. 22. Claudio Arrau (piano) with The Little Orchestra Society conducted by Thomas K. Scherman. Three sides, and **Chopin: Valse No. 1 in E flat major, Op. 18** ("Grande valse brillante"). Claudio Arrau (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-307. \$3.50.

We predict that Chopin fans will greet this item with unbounded enthusiasm for two reasons—they will admire the superb playing of Claudio Arrau and they will welcome the opportunity of securing

the *Andante Spianato* and *Grande Polonaise Brillante* performed as it was originally written for piano and orchestra. There have been several recordings of this work arranged for piano only, but this is the first we know of with the orchestral part included.

The *Andante Spianato* is for solo piano, and as its name indicates, it is a lovely serene selection that flows along without any particular emphasis. It is immediately followed by a very brief orchestral introduction to a typical Polish polonaise with long solo passages for piano to which is added from time to time delicate and appropriate orchestral support. As recorded in this album it is a thoroughly delightful musical experience and we do not hesitate to recommend it most highly. The fourth side is given over to a brilliant performance of the ever-popular *Grande valse brillante* which has been recorded by nearly every pianist who has come to the recording studio.

R.

Debussy: Réverie. One side, and **Beethoven: Bagatelle in A minor, "Für Elise"** (Groves No. 173). Jose Iturbi (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1458). \$1.05.

Two lovely selections beautifully played by Iturbi and faithfully recorded by RCA Victor—pleasing music at a modest price.

Schumann: Fantasiestücke, Op. 12, Nos. 3 and 4 ("Warum?" and "Grillen"). One side, and **Schumann: Fantasiestücke, Op. 12, No. 7** ("Traumeswirren"). Ania Dorfmann (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0424). \$1.31.

If you are not familiar with the artistic accomplishments of Ania Dorfmann, this disc should convince you of her great ability as a pianist. These three pieces from Schumann's famous *Fantasiestücke* are in different moods and present a test of the player's sense of appropriate treatment. Miss Dorfmann meets the challenge successfully and produces a disc that calls for the highest praise. RCA Victor has been equally successful with the piano reproduction.

Litoloff: Concerto Symphonique No. 4, Op. 102—Scherzo. Moura Lympny (piano) and the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Susskind. 1-12" disc (V-C-3763). \$2.

This section from Litolff's concerto is a showpiece for piano and Moura Lympny makes the most of a grand opportunity to display here brilliance in a performance that races along at top speed from start to finish. A number of years ago Irene Scharer made a recording of this excerpt and it was a sensation in England where thousands of copies were sold—quite a few copies came to America and it was a reasonable hit here. We had forgotten all about it until this new version arrived in a recent shipment. It is lively music with an appeal the first time it is heard. We don't believe anyone would want to hear it too often. Perhaps we are approaching it too seriously—perhaps

we are not in the mood for it today—perhaps you will think it is great stuff—perhaps you should listen to a few bars of it—perhaps when you do, you'll like it and buy it—perhaps you won't.

VIOLIN



Green: Romance. One side, and **Mozart—arr. Kross: Minuet in D.** Yehudi Menuhin (violin) accompanied by Gerald Moore (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1459). \$1.05.

Menuhin recorded the sound track for the very successful British film, "The Magic Bow," and these two selections were featured in that movie. With Gerald Moore's assistance he made recordings of them and they appear on the present disc. Green's *Romance* is based on a theme by Paganini and gives Menuhin an opportunity to display a lush and sensuous tone, while the Mozart *Minuet in D* calls for just the opposite in its delicate simplicity—Menuhin meets both demands nicely.

Kreisler: Liebeslied. One side, and **Kreisler: Liebesfreud.** Zino Francescatti (violin) accompanied by Arthur Balsam (piano). 1-10" disc (C-17560D). \$1.

A couple of Kreisler favorites nicely played by the brilliant violinist, Zino Francescatti and faithfully recorded by Columbia—tuneful melodies that anyone may enjoy.

Mendelssohn: Songs without Words, Op. 19, No. 1 ("Sweet Remembrance"). One side, and **Stravinsky: L'Oiseau de feu—Berceuse, and Shostakovich—trans. Glickman: Danse Fantaistique.** Jascha Heifetz (violin) accompanied by Emanuel Bay (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1457). \$1.05.

Two pleasing modern pieces, together with Mendelssohn's popular "Sweet Remembrance," make this a very attractive disc. Nicely played by Heifetz and splendidly recorded by RCA Victor.

ORGAN



Historical Organ Series—Pre-Bach. Mario Salvador (organ). 4-12" discs in album. GIOA Album MS-1. \$6.83.

Historical Organ Series—Bach. Mario Salvador (organ). 4-12" discs in album. GIOA Album MS-2. \$6.83.

The first two albums are available from a projected series which will include Cesar Franck, Modern French, and Modern German sets. We hope they do not overlook modern American composers or our British brethren. Mario Salvador, born in 1917 in the Dominican Republic, of Spanish descent, is a young man of considerable academic background. His name is well known in organ circles, and he is a member

of the organ faculty of the Gregorian Institute of America. The material at hand shows him to be a competent enough performer, technically very secure. Interpretively he is careful rather than colorful; the French and German albums to come should reveal his gifts more fully.

The Pre-Bach set contains the following works: *Echo pour Trompette* (Merulo), *Prelude (Grand Choeur)* (Gigault), *Toccata per l'Elevatione* (Frescobaldi), *Diferencias* (Cabezon), *Prelude* (Clerambault), *Prelude, Fugue, and Chaconne* (Buxtehude), *Fugue on the Kyrie and Benedictus* (Couperin), *Ave Maris Stella* (Titelouze), and *Von Himmel Hoch* (Pachelbel). These works cover a century and give a fair and very interesting traversal of the art during that period. The Buxtehude is a welcome addition to the ranks as is the Couperin, both being splendid works often heard in recitals.

The Bach set contains the *Prelude and Fugue in D major*, *Prelude and Fugue in A minor*, *Prelude and Fugue in E flat* ("St. Anne"), and *In Dulci Jubilo*. The program notes concerning Bach and the music are practically an insult to anyone reading them; they are insipid. Salvador's playing of these masterpieces is strictly from the score and not from his heart.

In future sets, the Gregorian Institute will do well to mention on the record labels the organ which Salvador is playing. It is a fine instrument and has been reasonably well recorded. They will also do well to have a competent outfit press their records, for these are as poor as any we have ever seen, most records are warped and of uneven thickness, resulting in slipping on the turntable. If a project is worthy, let's be a little more careful in the details. S.

HARPSICHORD



Bach: Four Duets (Clavierübung III). Frank Pelleg (harpsichord). 2-10" discs in album. Hargail Set. \$3.68.

Apparently Petrillo's ban did not extend to Israel, for the recordings of these four little pieces from Bach's *Clavierübung* were recorded by Mr. Pelleg during October 1948 in Museum Hall, Tel Aviv. Each piece is short and fits nicely on one side of a 10-inch disc. They are: No. 1, E minor; No. 2, F major; No. 3, G major; and No. 4, A minor. They are spirited and gay and Mr. Pelleg gives them a brilliant performance. The reproduction is excellent, although a trifle on the loud side; better keep your volume control turned down a little more than usual.

We understand that Hargail will send a portion of the profits from this album to Israeli to be divided between Histadruth, Israeli Composers Fund, and Yeshiva College.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$9.75.

Charles Delaunay's New Hot Discography. Edited by Walter E. Schaap and George Avakian. xviii + 608 pp. Criterion Music Corporation (New York). Price \$6.

Harold Bauer, His Book. By Harold Bauer. 306 pp. Illustrated. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$3.75.

The Record Book (International Edition). By David Hall. xii + 1394 pp. Oliver Durrell, Inc. (New York). Price \$7.50.

Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Record Music: A Dictionary of Musical Themes. Compiled by Harold Barlow and Sam Morgenstern with an introduction by John Erskine. xiii + 656 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CE—Cetra, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CT—Concertone, D—Decca, DI—Disc, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, HU—Harvard Film Service, HW—Hargail, IRCC—International Record Collector's Club, L—London Gramophone, ME—Mercury, MU—Muscrafft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, OK—Okeh, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radlofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Schrimmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, V—Victor, VX—Vox, and W—Woodwind.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

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WITH this issue, the sixteenth volume of THE NEW RECORDS is completed, and we find the record collector in a bit of a quandary. The numbers 78, $33\frac{1}{3}$ and 45 are buzzing around in his brain. It would be simple enough if he could pick one number and forget the others, but it is not so easy as that. The records that he has been buying for years are made to be played at 78 revolutions per minute and the LP records that Columbia introduced last year at $33\frac{1}{3}$ r.p.m.; and now RCA Victor announces that it will soon introduce a record to be played at 45 r.p.m.—a record with a large hole in the center which cannot possibly be played on any turntable that is presently available.

This certainly sounds very confusing but it really isn't quite so bad as one might think. Every record collector has a phonograph that plays the 78 r.p.m. discs and many of them have purchased a $33\frac{1}{3}$ r.p.m. player and had one attached to their instruments—quite a few have substituted a two-speed turntable with two arms for their single-speed mechanism. Thus a goodly number of persons, who are interested in recorded music, are now equipped to play both the standard discs and the new LP recordings. And at this point, we might remark that those music lovers who have equipped their instruments for playing the LP recordings are almost without exception highly enthusiastic about the long-playing records. We feel that it is fair to state that the LP recordings are an established success. Enough time has elapsed since they were introduced last June for them to have had a real test in the hands of the public, and, after all, it is the public that must be the final judge.

Now let us see what the music lover who has an instrument that will play both the 78

and the $33\frac{1}{3}$ r.p.m. records has to worry about. He can play any standard record and he can play a record that will give him twenty-two minutes of uninterrupted music on one side of a 12-inch disc. He can use a record that contains a complete symphony or concerto on its two sides. Columbia has recently announced a new seven-inch $33\frac{1}{3}$ r.p.m. disc that will retail for 63¢ on which will be made available popular dance tunes. Thus he can supply the young folks with the hits of the day at a reasonable price. At the moment, we would say that he doesn't have anything to worry about.

We cannot see how the new 45 r.p.m. record and automatic record player that RCA Victor proposes to make available sometime this spring can affect this music lover. The new RCA Victor record will be made in one size only with a diameter of a trifle less than seven inches and will play less than a minute longer than a standard 78 r.p.m. 12-inch disc. It is therefore in no sense a long-playing record. The chief features, as we see them, are that the new RCA Victor changer has a very quick action, changing records in less than three seconds; it is simple in operation, and probably will be made available at a low price. In view of that fact that the maximum playing time is five minutes, we would assume that these records will be largely devoted to popular selections that can be played in that period of time. We hardly believe that the public would wish a classic selection cut into four sections of five minutes each when it can presently be contained on one side of an LP disc that is capable of giving twenty-two minutes of uninterrupted music.

When we consider the situation thoughtfully, it really isn't nearly as confusing as it would seem at first glance, and the changes that are

taking place do not seem in any way to have lessened the interest in recorded music. The number of our subscribers has steadily increased, and today many more music lovers are reading THE NEW RECORDS than at any time in our long history.

A large majority of subscriptions end with this issue—if yours does, please return the enclosed blank promptly in order that you may not miss any issues. If your subscription still has some months to run, we will extend it for an additional twelve months upon receipt of your renewal at this time. We send renewal blanks with the February issue only which is the last number of each volume.

* * *

Cetra-Soria has recently announced that its 1949 catalog is now available. This lists all recordings to date of the imported Cetra and Cetra-Soria recordings by artist and by composer. Interested readers may obtain a copy by writing to the publishers of this bulletin and enclosing a 3¢ stamp with their requests.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues published during the last sixteen years are available. The price is 5¢ each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

LP RELEASES FOR JANUARY 1949

The items listed below were scheduled for release on Columbia's LP Microgroove records in January 1949. Inasmuch as each item was reviewed previously in THE NEW RECORDS when the shellac pressings were released, the issue containing this review is given with each listing.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Op. 125 ("Choral"). Westminster Choir conducted by John Finley Williamson and The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. Three sides, and **Beethoven: Leonore Overture No. 3 in C major, Op. 72a**. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Paul Kletzki. 2-12" discs. Columbia Set SL-50. \$9.70. (TNR Nov. '45).

Spirituals. Paul Robeson (baritone) with accompaniments by Lawrence Brown. One side, and **A Robeson Recital of Popular Favorites** (arr. Lockwood). Paul Robeson (baritone) with the Columbia Concert Orchestra conducted by

Emanuel Balaban. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4105). \$4.85. (TNR June '46 and Apr. '48).

Beethoven: Quartet No. 14 in C-sharp minor, Op. 131. Budapest String Quartet. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4106). \$4.85. (TNR Jan. '41).

Kostelanetz Conducts. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4107). \$4.85. (TNR Sept. '45).

Mozart: Symphony No. 39 in E-flat major, K. 543. Cleveland Orchestra conducted by George Szell. One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 88 in G major** (B. & H. No. 13). Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4109). \$4.85. (TNR Feb. '49 and Jan. '49).

Do You Remember? Morton Gould and his Orchestra. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2028). \$3.85. (TNR Dec. '48).

Mahler: Lieder eines Fahrenden Gesellen. Carol Brice (contralto) with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. One side, and **Sacred Arias of Johann Sebastian Bach**. Carol Brice (contralto) with the Columbia Broadcasting Concert Orchestra conducted by Daniel Saidenberg. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4108). \$4.85 (TNR Aug. '48 and Sept. '47).

Morton Gould Symphonic Band. Symphonic Band conducted by Morton Gould. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2029). \$3.85. (TNR July '48).

Waltzes of Tchaikovsky. Vitya Vronsky and Victor Babin (duo-pianists). 1-10" disc (C-ML-2030). \$3.85. (TNR Sept. '48).

Milhaud. Le Boeuf sur le Toit. One side, and **Ravel: Le Tombeau de Couperin**. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2032). \$3.85. (TNR Feb. '49 and July '42).

Rimsky-Korsakov: La Grande Pâque Russe Overture, Op. 36. One side, and **Prokofiev: Classical Symphony in D major, Op. 25**. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2035). \$3.85. (TNR Apr. '47 and Dec. '47).

ORCHESTRA



Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 3 in D, Op. 29 ("Polish"). The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 5-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1297. \$7.25.

The effort has been made in recent years to popularize the first three symphonies of Tchaikovsky. If the public loves the last three so dearly, why not

capitalize on the fact that the same man also wrote the other three? The venture has met with some success, although the majority of unsophisticated music lovers still cling to the last three exclusively. The more venturesome have investigated the first three and found them rather pleasant. In whatever class you consider yourself, Sir Thomas has provided a reading of the *Third* which is bound to compel your attention. Leave it to this erudite master of the baton to display this music in the best possible manner. His ability to make it interesting without resorting to any tricks or distortions is once again amazing. And the playing of the Royal Philharmonic leaves no doubt in your mind that it is one of the great orchestras of the world. The reproduction is a model of clarity and good timbre, again demonstrating the superiority of RCA Victor's English affiliates.

The sub-title "Polish" stems from the work's final movement, marked *Tempo di polacca*, a spirited version of the polonaise rhythm. In five movements, the *Third* is more a suite than a symphony and much of it is balletic in style. Every moment commanded our interest in Sir Thomas' revealing performance. We can recommend this set very highly. S.

Coates: Four Centuries Suite. National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eric Coates. 2-12" discs in album. London Set LA-35. \$5.25.

In announcing this album by England's most popular composer of light music, London describes the work very nicely with the following paragraph:

"*The Four Centuries Suite* is Coates at his most evocative. The dashing, cavalier days of England's Restoration Period; the 18th century of the Georges—age of bewigged and beruffled beaux and courtly, crinoline ladies; the dignified Victorian Era and our own streamlined, high-g geared 20th century, all are faithfully portrayed in these four descriptive musical sketches."

The composer has entitled the four sections of his work as follows: *Prelude and Hornpipe* (17th century); *Pavane and Tambourin* (18th); *Valse* (19th); and *Rhythm* (20th). It's all very delightful and pleasing music, and the reproduction is of the very best. We highly recommend this album for some light and cheerful melodies that will be new to most listeners on this side of the Atlantic.

Hamerik: Symphony No. 6 in G, Op. 38 ("Spirituelle"). The Boyd Neel String Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel. 4-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-85. \$9.45.

Ager Hamerik was director of the Peabody Conservatory of Music in Baltimore, and of the Peabody symphony concerts, from 1871 to 1898. He was born in Copenhagen in 1843, died in 1923. He studied in Berlin with Bulow (piano); at Paris he met Berlioz who went with him to Vienna; later on he spent some time in Italy, finally coming to Peabody.

He composed quite a lot and in various forms, opera, chamber, orchestra, and choral.

The present work has been played numerous times over the air by string orchestras. It is a distinctly pleasant affair that could not be called great music, but is nevertheless worthwhile. It is serious and sensible, well constructed but of not too great subject matter. And if your imagination is as nasty as ours, you will undoubtedly find reminiscences of other composers (we are ashamed to admit Tchaikovsky, Mozart, Delius, Brahms, and maybe some others). Yet we would hesitate to call it derivative music. A man who wrote four operas, six symphonies, five suites, and many other things must be considered more than a dilettante.

The symphony is in four movements with conventional markings, the second being short and particularly appealing. None of it is dull, and you will very likely find it pleasant and agreeable listening. Boyd Neel directs with apparent devotion and his dependable group plays with its usual fine finish. Reproduction is *ffrr*, which is to say tops. S.

Orchestral Jewels. Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra conducted by Wolf-Ferrari. 2-12" discs in album. London Set LA-33. \$5.25.

The Curious Women—Minuet & Furlana.

Jewels of the Madonna—Intermezzo.

The Four Peasants—Intermezzo.

Secret of Suzanne—Overture.

A few months before his recent death, Wolf-Ferrari led the Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra in these recordings of several of his most popular orchestral selections. Thus this album has a sentimental as well as a musical value. The reproduction is splendid and the surfaces of these English discs are as smooth as glass.

Milhaud: Le Boeuf sur le Toit. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-308. \$3.50.

In introducing this album of honky-tonk music *par excellence* Columbia gives a brief story of its history as follows:

"*Le Boeuf Sur Le Toit* (or 'The Nothing Doing Bar') is the result of a collaboration between two of the most brilliant contemporary French artists—the playwright, Jean Cocteau and the composer, Darius Milhaud. Actually, the score was composed in 1919 without Cocteau in mind, merely as a piece 'gay and full of movement,' to fit any silent Chaplin film. Then Cocteau heard it and was enchanted. He proposed to use the score for a pantomime and immediately wrote a synopsis to fit the music. Its setting is an American speakeasy during the days of Prohibition. The chief characters are a nonchalant and resourceful bartender, a Negro boxer, a charming assortment of ladies and a graceful policeman

who literally loses his head.

"So entertaining and popular was this pantomime that the famous 'Boeuf Sur Le Toit' bar in Paris was named after it. Milhaud himself conducted the first English performance under the title of 'The Nothing Doing Bar.' But even without stage action, the comic spirit and delicious humor of the score comes across. Mr. Mitropoulos, conducting the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, shows that music can be as satiric and as witty as literature."

Fortunately the story of the pantomime is told in great detail on the inside cover of this album and thus we have some idea what this jumble of honky-tonk is all about.

Mozart: Symphony No. 39 in E-flat major, K. 543. Cleveland Orchestra conducted by George Szell. 3-12" discs in album, Columbia Set MM-801. \$4.75.

We rather feel that most music lovers will think that this is the best recorded version of this very popular symphony—one of the last three of the great master. Of the many recordings that have been made of this work, the present version will most likely be compared with the Beecham recording with the London Philharmonic, which was released in this country by Columbia in the summer of 1941. In that recording many critics thought that Beecham, usually one of the best Mozart interpreters, was a bit too ponderous and that the reproduction lacked clarity.

Szell has caught the sparkling spirit of this lovely work and presents it as we believe most discerning musicians would have it played. As the reproduction is excellent, we do not hesitate to remark that this is one of the most satisfying albums we have come across in several months.

Suk: Serenade for String Orchestra, Op. 6. Czech Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Vaclav Talich. 4-12" discs in album (V-DB-9269 to V-DB-9272) (automatic sequence). \$10.50.

Not great music but mighty pleasing—music that you can relax and enjoy without any great effort on your part—played with taste by a fine orchestra under the direction of an able musician who does not try to make the music sound more important than it really is. If you would like some music that will very likely be new to you, composed during his school days by Dvorák's son-in-law, we suggest that you investigate these discs which arrived in a recent shipment from abroad.

A Night in Tivoli. Royal Symphony Orchestra, Copenhagen, conducted by Georg Hoeberg. 2-12" discs in album. London Set LA-34. \$5.25.

Hans Christian Lumbye (1810-1874), known as the "Danish Strauss," was a prolific composer of marches and dance music and at one time conducted the orchestra at "Tivoli," a summer amusement park in Copenhagen. This park is still in existence and

concerts similar to those of the Boston "Pops" are given each summer.

This album contains a number of Lumbye selections, some of which were probably written to be played at "Tivoli"—thus the title, "A Night in Tivoli." From a musical standpoint they are not of much importance, but they are tuneful and pleasing, and it is interesting to hear the music that our Danish friends enjoy on a summer evening with perhaps a mug of beer or two.

The selections are: *Christian IX Honormarch*; *Queen Louise Waltz*; *Concerto Polca for Two Violins and Orchestra*; *Britz Polka*; and *Champagne Galop*.

Auber Overtures. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1274. \$6.

These tuneful overtures are fine fare for the Boston "Pops" and those persons who find this old-fashioned music attractive should be highly pleased with these recordings. RCA Victor has achieved brilliant and faithful reproduction.

The Auber overtures contained in this collection are: *Masaniello*; *Fra Diavolo*; *The Bronze Horse*; and *The Crown Diamonds*.

Massenet: La Vierge—Le dernier sommeil de la vierge. One side, and **Mendelssohn: Octet in E flat major, Op. 20—Scherzo.** Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (V-12-0688). \$1.31.

Two lovely little selections in the quiet manner nicely played under the meticulous direction of Sir Thomas Beecham and splendidly recorded—unusual music for the discerning record collector.

Coates: By a Sleepy Lagoon. New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eric Coates. 3-10" discs in album. London Set LA-43. \$3.94.

Eric Coates, Britain's most popular composer of light music, has selected a half-dozen of his always tuneful little pieces, headed by the world-wide hit *By a Sleepy Lagoon*, for this attractive little album. In addition to the piece that gives this album its title, there are included: *Song of Loyalty*; *Bird Songs at Eventide*; *Television March*; *Knightsbridge March*; and *Wood Nymphs*. The reproduction is well up to London's high standard.

CONCERTO



Haydn: Concerto No. 1 in C for Violin and String Orchestra. Isaac Stern (violin) with string orchestra, Alexander Zakin (cembalo). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-799. \$4.75.

Of Haydn's nine violin concertos, the *D minor* has had two recordings, both continental, and none of the others have been touched. The present set represents the first recording of this work, as well

as the first domestic recording of any Haydn concerto; the violoncello, harpsichord, and trumpet concertos all having been recorded in Europe.

Isaac Stern is the country's fastest rising young violinist, and is actually an outstanding artist at this time. It is a fine thing to have him turn to some of the less hackneyed works and present us with fresh material. The Haydn *Concerto No. 1* is hardly a profound work, but it is certainly enjoyable. Classical in form, it contains some showy passages, for the fiddler's technique, which remain sweet and clear and musical. The neglect of these masterpieces is hard to understand and shows discredit to the virtuoso violinists today who play the same handful of works over again every season. All the credit then to Stern for his enterprise. His performance of the concerto is worthy of the highest praise, for his skill, fine tone, and sense of proportion. The music is played with proper style but not in a dry or mechanical manner. The accompanying group, with cembalo, provides excellent support, and the whole work is reproduced with marvelous fidelity. Yes, we loved every minute of this album.

The *C major Concerto* was composed sometime between 1766 and 1770 during Haydn's earlier years as music director to the Esterházy family. The first performance was probably at the patron's palace under Haydn's direction with Luigi Tomasini as soloist, he being first violinist of the court orchestra and the artist to whom the work is dedicated. S.

Saint-Saëns: Concerto No. 1 in A minor, Op. 33. Pierre Fournier (violoncello) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Susskind. 2-12" discs (V-DB-6602 and V-DB-6603) (manual sequence). \$5.25.

This is the first and better known of the two cello concerti composed by Saint-Saëns. It is odd to note that many music critics of that day complained of his modern tendencies and went so far as to accuse him of "Wagnerianism." This is most amusing since time has proven Saint-Saëns to be one of the easiest writers to comprehend. The movements in this work are connected by short transitional passages, giving the entire composition a unity of form. It is a brilliantly written opus exploiting the entire range and technical resources of the instrument.

Some seven or eight years ago Piatigorsky made a recording of this work with the Chicago Symphony and it enjoyed reasonable popularity. We have just compared it with the present recording and we must say our preference is for the later version. At this point, we would like to say that the French violoncellist, Pierre Fournier, is an artist of distinction, and if you are not familiar with his art, we suggest that you lose no time in making his acquaintance. This recording of Saint-Saëns' *Concerto in A minor* provides an excellent opportunity. Fine reproduction is an added feature.

Stravinsky: Concerto for Two Pianos. Five sides, and **Mozart: Andante and Variations in G major, K. 501.** Vera Appleton and Michael Field (duo-pianists). 3-12" discs in album. Vox Set 634. \$4.75.

This interesting work for two pianos alone was composed in 1935 and was presented in Paris by the composer and his son, Sviatoslav, at a concert given on 21 November of that year. It is truly two-piano music; there is no evidence of a solo piano with a piano accompaniment taking the place of the orchestra as in the usual modern concerto. It was conceived by the composer as an opus for two pianos and that it certainly is. For those who are interested, Edward Tatnall Canby has supplied copious notes on the work which will be found on the inside cover of this album.

Miss Appleton and Mr. Field give a clear-cut performance of Stravinsky's music which is largely in percussive and rhythmic style. Students of modern music should not miss this album. The reproduction is highly satisfactory.

Medtner Society Set (Vol. II). Concerto No. 3 in E minor, Op. 60 (nine sides). Nicolas Medtner (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Issay Dobrowen. **Sonata Vocale, Op. 41** (three sides). Margaret Ritchie (soprano) accompanied by Nicolas Medtner (piano). **Improvisation, Op. 31, No. 1** (two sides). Nicolas Medtner (piano). 7-12" discs in album (V-DB-9259 to V-DB-9265) (automatic sequence). \$18.38.

NOTE: This set was received too late for review this month. A review of it will appear in our March issue.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Bloch: Quartet No. 2. Nine sides, and **Bloch: Night.** Griller String Quartet. 5-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-93. \$11.55.

Just a year ago we reviewed the first recording of Bloch's *String Quartet No. 2*. It was International Set No. 301 and the recording was made by the Stuyvesant String Quartet. We praised the work of this fine group of players highly, and in comparing their recording with the present one by the Griller players, we have come to the opinion, that from a purely musical point of view there is little to choose between them. If we were pinned down to it, we would probably give the edge to the Stuyvesant Quartet. However, the present version has the very considerable benefit of English Decca *ffrr* reproduction and the glassy surfaces of the imported records. Whether it is worth over double the price is a matter that each one must decide for himself.

Bloch's second string quartet follows his first, which was somewhat in the nature of an experiment in that form, after an interval of nearly thirty years (not as the notes in this album say—"about twenty-one years"). The first dates from 1916 and the second was written at the composer's present home in Oregon in 1945. It was first performed in London in the autumn of 1946, and the distinguished English critic, Ernest Newman, said on that occasion: "Ernest Bloch's new string quartet is, in my opinion, the finest work of our time in this genre, one that is worthy to stand beside the last quartets of Beethoven." Perhaps Mr. Newman's statement is a bit too strong, but surely this work should have the careful consideration of all thoughtful music lovers.

Two fine recorded versions now make this easily possible. R.

Toch: String Quartet, Op. 70. London String Quartet. 3-12" discs in album, Alco Set A-5. \$5.35.

This recent work of Ernest Toch is definitely one for persons interested in modern music. It is written in the modern idiom and is throughout serious music without a moment's relaxation—not a touch of humor or relief of any kind from the first bar to the last note. Lawrence Morton, who has supplied the notes for this album, indicates that the first three movements are given over to a search for a philosophy that will meet the problems of our time; the fourth states the composer's definite approach and the solution comes in the final majestic passages that affirm his faith.

This is not a piece of music to be taken lightly. One must give it great thought or leave it alone. Whether it is worth the effort, each one must decide for himself. It has been given an intense performance by the excellent London String Quartet and the reproduction is entirely satisfactory.

Serious students of music will be interested in Mr. Toch's opus, others should "try before they buy." R.

Schubert: Trio No. 1 in B-flat major, Op. 99. Trio di Trieste. 4-12" discs in album (V-C-7729 to V-C-7732) (automatic sequence). \$7.98.

It seems like bringing coals to Newcastle to import this album when we have available in this country the superb RCA Victor recording of this work by Rubinstein, Heifetz and Feuermann. However, the Trio di Trieste version received a glowing review when it was released in England several months ago, and if you are interested in making a comparison both sets are now available for your choice. We rather feel that the larger number of music lovers will choose the earlier RCA Victor album (DM-923).

The *Trio in B flat* was written by Schubert during the month of October, 1827—considerably more than a hundred years ago. Its beauties of melodic invention have become increasingly apparent with the

passage of time, and today, more than ever, we find among its lovely intricacies something to be taken and held to the heart, warmly; to be loved, enjoyed and cherished.

Particularly beautiful is the exquisite second movement, *Andante un poco mosso*, one of those happy and apparently spontaneous inspirations which only an artist of the rarest and highest genius could have produced. The first theme of this movement, outlined by the 'cello and then repeated by the violin, is a melody that haunts one long after the music has actually ceased. The charm and lightness of the final *Allegro vivace* must surely be apparent to the most unschooled of music lovers!

Beethoven: Trio No. 4 in D major, Op. 70, No. 1 ("Ghost"). Adolf Busch (violin), Hermann Busch (violoncello), and Rudolf Serkin (piano). 3-12" discs in album, Columbia Set MM-804. \$4.75.

Some ten years ago, Yehudi Menuhin and his sister, Hephzibah, together with Maurice Eusenberg, made a recording of this work and it enjoyed a reasonable sale when it was first released. Now we have a new version by the Busch brothers and Adolf Busch's son-in-law, the distinguished pianist, Rudolf Serkin—quite a family affair, isn't it? It is a great combination and we hope that we will have more recordings by these superb artists.

You will probably recall this work, which is generally known as "The Ghost Trio," because of its melancholy second movement marked *Largo assai*. It is generally known as No. 5, although the present album is labelled No. 4. The *Grand Trio in B flat major, Op. 11* for piano, violoncello and either clarinet or violin is usually considered as No. 4. The present opus is well worth serious consideration by all discerning music lovers for it is the dramatic Beethoven going the way to his last period as we know it in the *Mass in D*.

Columbia should be congratulated for the fine reproduction it has achieved.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 3 in A, Op. 69. Pierre Fournier (violoncello) and Artur Schnabel (piano). 3-12" discs in album, RCA Victor Set DM-1231. \$4.75.

When this recording was issued in England in the fall of 1947, A. R. writing in *The Gramophone* (London) said:

"Magnificent recordings such as this are a salutary reminder that the prejudice about chamber music can usually be traced to poor performances and vanishes when something like this, of the highest quality, is put before people."

Since we read those lines, we have been more than anxious to hear this album. We were not disappointed when we played it. Certainly the French violoncellist, Pierre Fournier, displays a talent of

top-rank and he is splendidly supported by that truly great Beethoven interpreter, Artur Schnabel. It is a fine performance with faithful reproduction, and we are glad to add our praise to that of the distinguished English critic whose words we quoted at the beginning of this little review.

This lovely work has been recorded several times before, but we are sure that most collectors will prefer the version made available this month by RCA Victor.



CHORAL

Polyphonic Masters of the XVI Century. Graduating Class (1948) of the Gregorian Institute, directed by Dom Ermin Vitry, O. S. B. 4-12" discs in album. Gregorian Institute Set PM-1. \$8.03.

In the foreword to the notes that are supplied with it, the object of this important album is nicely stated. From the foreword we quote:

"In order to gain a proper evaluation of the musical art of the sixteenth century, we are direly in need of recordings which emphasize the true qualifications of this gigantic and yet lofty music. Of the many choral recordings available, classic polyphony is represented only by scant and timid attempts, oftentimes devoid of the true characteristics of this unexcelled period of choral art. The present album brings into proper perspective a form of music which has considerably deteriorated in modern times, and whose acquaintance may restore to contemporary music the healthy objectivity which it has obviously lost."

Most of the selections in this album are for four mixed voices and all of them have been edited by the distinguished scholar of this musical period, Dom Ermin Vitry, O.S.B. We feel that they are authoritative and so recommend them.

The selections are: *O vos omnes* (Palestrina); *Ave vera virginitas* (Josquin des Pres); *Ecce quomodo moritur justus* (Palestrina); *In pace in idipsum* (Orlando de Lassus); *Kyrie* and *Agnus Dei* from Missa "Ave Maris Stella" (Josquin des Pres); *Jubilate Deo* (Carolus Andreas); and *Cantate Domino* (L. Viadana).

The reproduction has been nicely accomplished.

The Dashing White Sergeant—arr. Robertson. One side, and **Green: Ellan Vannin**. Glasgow Orpheus Choir conducted by Sir Hugh Robertson. 1-10" disc (V-B-9663). \$1.42.

A goodly number of collectors on this side of the Atlantic are interested in recordings by the famous Glasgow Orpheus Choir and we are very sure that they will not be disappointed in the above disc which recently arrived from England. It contains two interesting selections and the singing is well up to the standard that we have learned to expect from that excellent group.

OPERA

Favorite Operatic Arias. Jussi Bjoerling (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Nils Grevillius. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-1275. \$4.75.

La Bohème—Che gelida manina (Act I).

Aïda—Celeste Aïda (Act I).

Carmen—La fleur que tu m'avais jetée (Act II).

Cavalleria Rusticana—Addio alla madre.

Marta—M'appari (Act III).

Faust—Salut, demeure (Act II).

Here is an album bristling with gleaming tenor top-tones. These six operatic arias, now collected in one album, have been issued separately before. They were all recorded in Sweden, as the name of conductor Nils Grevillius would indicate, and they were all produced at different periods of Jussi Bjoerling's now assured career.

Gathered between the covers of one album, they present a very homogeneous feast to the ear, proving that Mr. Bjoerling's excellencies and tonal features have changed hardly at all with the passing years.

It is difficult to imagine six more celebrated tenor arias than these from *Bohème*, *Aïda*, *Carmen*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Faust* and *Marta*.

The singing is clean, fresh, firm, and quite lovely, though perhaps lacking in the ultimate sensuousness and warmth of the best Italian tenors. The high notes have an exciting ring, and for those who care for such matters—and who among lovers of operatic singing doesn't?—there are two top C's, one in *Bohème*, and one in *Faust*. Many tenors transpose these arias down half a tone, but Mr. Bjoerling, with his facility for soaring skyward, waves any such transposition aside.

The tenor's Italian diction, especially in the *Bohème* aria, is not always sure, but this is but a minor flaw. Whoever gets this album avails himself of a fine, honest, straightforward job. The reproduction is a model of clarity and balance.

MAX DE SCHAUBENSEE.

Charpentier: Louise—Depuis le jour (Act III). One side, and **Bizet: Carmen**—Je dis que rien ne m'épouvante—Air de Micaëla (Act III). (Sung in French). Eleanor Steber (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Susskind. 1-12" disc (V-12-0690). \$1.31.

(This annotation is reprinted from the November 1948 issue. It appeared in this place when the imported recording of this work was reviewed.)

While on a visit to England Eleanor Steber made some recordings for H. M. V. This is the first disc to reach this country. Let us see what the critic of *The Gramophone* (London) has to say about Miss

Steber's renditions of these well-known arias:

"If Eleanor Steber does not sound much like the trembling little figure (Micaëla) the opening words describe, the splendid quality of her singing quite carries one away. It is lovely in tone, sure in attack, and the artist is equipped with a particularly appealing *portamento*. Her recording of *Depuis le jour* is by far the best I have ever heard and has in it a real feeling of rapture . . .

"The orchestral accompanying is good and the horns, which precede Micaëla's air, are, thank goodness, in tune and clear, and not an indistinct wobble of sound. The balance with the voice is particularly good in the 'Louise' air, and so we get the thrill of the climax. I warmly recommend the superb singing of this artist and the general excellence of the recording."

Delibes: Lakmè—Lakmè, ton doux regard se voile (Act II). One side, and **Gounod: Faust**—Il était temps (Act III). (Sung in Russian). Feodor Chaliapin (bass) with orchestral accompaniment. 1-12" disc (V-15-1041). \$2.63.

Bellini: Norma—Ite sul colle, O Druidil (Act I). One side, and **Boito: Mefistofele**—Son lo spirito che nega (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Feodor Chaliapin (bass) with orchestral accompaniment. 1-12" disc (V-15-1042). \$2.63.

Moussorgsky: Boris Godounoff—Monologue: I have attained the highest power (Act II). (Sung in Russian). Feodor Chaliapin (bass) with orchestral accompaniment. 1-12" disc (V-15-1043). \$2.63.

Moussorgsky: Boris Godounoff—Clock Scene: Ah! I am suffocating (Act II). One side, and **Moussorgsky: Boris Godounoff**—Farewell, my son, I am dying (Act IV). (Sung in Russian). Feodor Chaliapin (bass) with orchestral accompaniment. 1-12" disc (V-15-1044). \$2.63.

Meyerbeer: Robert le Diable—Evocazione: Suore, che riposate. One side, and **Verdi: Don Carlos**—Domiro sol nel manto mio regal (Act IV). (Sung in Italian). Feodor Chaliapin (bass) with orchestral accompaniment. 1-12" disc (V-15-1045). \$2.63.

RCA Victor's eighth release of its Heritage Series is also dedicated to the art of a single artist; in this case, the immortal Russian basso, Feodor Chaliapin.

Volumes could be written about this amazing giant of the lyric stage, and much, as a matter of fact, has been said and written. It suffices here to say that those who had the great privilege of hearing and seeing Chaliapin performances can never forget them. They were unique; they were manifestations of utter genius.

RCA Victor has selected wisely, presenting records of Chaliapin that range from 1909 to 1928. Being

a great international star, Chaliapin recorded in every corner of the world. Therefore it is not surprising to note that these selections were made in as diversified places as St. Petersburg, Moscow, Milan, London and Camden, N. J.

Naturally enough, four of the present selections are from Chaliapin's unforgettable portrayal of Boris in Moussorgsky's opera. These were made at an actual performance at Covent Garden, London, in July 1928. While other Boris records by Chaliapin are more clearly and forcibly reproduced, it is undeniably interesting to have excerpts from a living performance of the basso's greatest role. The ballad, *Son lo spirito che nega* from Boito's engrossing *Mefistofele* is also taken from a Covent Garden performance, this time in May 1926. All these Covent Garden records feature the orchestral direction of Vincenzo Bellezza.

Of great interest is a First Edition. The recording of the scene, *Suore, che riposate* from Meyerbeer's *Robert le Diable*, for some strange reason was never before released. It is a splendid example of the basso's huge voice and highly individual style of singing, and was made in Camden in January, 1924, during one of Chaliapin's several seasons at the Metropolitan Opera House.

The arias from *Faust*, *Lakmé* and *Don Carlos* were recorded in Russia on dates ranging from 1909 to 1910. Chaliapin, at the time, was 36, and we therefore have records of him in his absolute vocal prime. As a matter of fact, the singer's voice sounds strangely light and youthful—almost like a lyric baritone—in the *Lakmé* selection. The *Don Carlos* recording is one of the outstanding examples of this great voice at its best, and is not to be confused with his later American recording of the same aria.

The *Norma* excerpt, with full chorus, presents Chaliapin during a season at the famous La Scala in Milan, and shows him quite at home in Bellini's music.

It is indeed fitting that the Caruso Heritage release should have been followed by this tribute to Chaliapin. It is curious that these two towering giants of the lyric scene should have been born during the same year—1873. Caruso, however, died in 1921, while his great Russian confrere survived him by 17 years and kept his voice unimpaired until a year or two before his death. Bassos come and go, but an artist of the stature of Chaliapin may appear once during several generations.

MAX DE SCHAUNSEE.

Mozart: Die Zauberfloete, K. 620—Der Holle Rache. One side, and **Saint-Saëns: Parysatis**—Le Rossignol et la Rose. (Sung in English). Gwen Catley (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Hugo Rignold. 1-10" disc (V-B-9674). \$1.42.

To hear Gwen Catley sing the Saint-Saëns selection, which is a wordless vocalise from the incidental

music to Dieulafoy's play *Parysatis*, is well worth the price of this little disc. It is coloratura singing without peer, and as the selection will be new to most listeners, it is a novelty worthy of investigation. Miss Catley is always right on the key and her notes are as clear and beautiful as any that we have heard in many a long day.

Puccini: Manon Lescaut—Sola, perduta, abbandonata (Act IV). One side, and **Giordano: Andrea Chenier**—La mamma morta (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Joan Hammond (soprano) with The Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Lawrence Collingwood. 1-12" disc (V-C-3720). \$2.

Joan Hammond's is not a great voice—the aria from *Andrea Chenier* is a bit too much for her—she fares much better in the Puccini selection—in fact we rather think that she sang it very well. Neither of these arias are represented in the domestic catalogs with modern recordings and so this disc may have more than passing interest for opera fans. The reproduction is quite satisfactory throughout.

Puccini: La Bohème—Donde lieta usci (Act III). One side, and **Puccini: Manon Lescaut**—In quelle trine morbide (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Sara Scuderi (soprano) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-10" disc (V-B-9659). \$1.42.

Collectors of operatic recordings here in America are always anxious to hear the new operatic records that are issued abroad—here is an opportunity to investigate one that was well received in England when it was released last summer. Miss Scuderi does not have a great voice but she does render these arias quite acceptably and she has the benefit of well-balanced orchestral support.

Giordano: Fedora—Amor ti vieta (Act II). One side, and **Cilea: Adriana Lecouvreur**—L'anima ho stanca (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Stefano Islandi (tenor) with members of the Tivoli Concert Orchestra conducted by Felumb. 1-10" disc (V-DA-5202). \$1.95.

Neither of these arias are presently listed in the domestic catalogs and thus opera fans will doubtless welcome this disc from the Danish catalog. It introduces the Italian lyric tenor, Stefano Islandi, a gentleman with a pleasing voice which he uses very well—not a big voice but one of fine quality.

Bizet: Carmen—Parle-moi de ma mère (Act I). (Sung in French). Florence Quartararo (soprano) and Ramon Vinay (tenor) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. 1-12" disc (V-12-0687). \$1.31.

A separate record of this important scene from *Carmen* has been missing from the domestic catalogs for many years and so the present recording is espe-

cially welcome. Miss Quartararo and Mr. Vinay give us a lifelike performance—quite a thrilling one. RCA Victor has supplied satisfactory reproduction.

Wagner: Lohengrin—Höchstes Vertrau'n (Act III). One side, and **Wagner: Lohengrin**—Gralserszählung: In fernem Land (Act III). (Sung in German). Set Svanholm (tenor) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 1-12" disc (V-12-0691). \$1.31.

Set Svanholm's many admirers in this country will doubtless welcome this new disc containing two arias from *Lohengrin*. Mr. Svanholm sings them in his usual fine style and the reproduction is satisfactory.

Delius: A Village Romeo and Juliet (Complete Opera). (Sung in English). Margaret Ritchie, Dorothy Bond, Lorely Dyer, Marjorie Avis, Marion Davies (sopranos); Gwladys Garside (mezzo-soprano); Rene Soames, Lloyd Strauss-Smith (tenors); Dennis Dowling, Frederick Sharp, Gordon Clinton, Donald Munroe (baritones); Philip Hattey (bass-baritone); and Chorus and Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 12-12" discs in 2 albums (V-DB-9306 to V-DB-9317). \$31.50.

NOTE: This set was received too late for review this month. A review of it will appear in our March issue.

VOCAL



Beethoven: An die ferne Geliebte, Op. 98. William Horne (tenor) accompanied by Franz Rupp (piano). 2-10" discs in album. Mercury Set DM-8. \$3.15.

Beethoven wrote his only song cycle, *An die ferne Geliebte*, in the year 1816, a period of personal troubles which nevertheless also produced the *Sonata in A, Opus 101* for piano. This set of six songs, to be sung without pause or interruption, is considered a model of its kind.

A young lover on a hilltop musing over parting with his beloved is the subject of six poems by Alois Jeitteles. They are frankly sentimental, and reflect the feeling of far-flung and romantic sentiments of the period in which they were written.

Mercury, which has issued this set, introduces a new artist to record collectors—William Horne, lyric tenor. Mr. Horne, an American, has come into some prominence by having sung the title-role of Benjamin Britten's *Peter Grimes* when the opera's American premiere took place at Tanglewood's Berkshire Festival during the summer of 1946.

Mr. Horne has a nice, smooth voice, if a little on the nasal side in its placement. His style is good for this simple and serene music, but he can hardly be said to have plumbed any new depths. As a matter of fact, young Mr. Horne runs into the stiffest kind

of competition, for such seasoned and distinguished artists as Gerhard Hüsch, Heinrich Schlusnus and Charles Panzera have also taken care of Beethoven's cycle for the phonograph.

Nevertheless, it is pleasant to hear a fresh-voiced young American artist in this music, and the accompaniments of Franz Rupp are outstanding. Balance is excellent. **MAX DE SCHAUNSEE.**

Mozart: Et incarnatus est (from "Mass in C minor, K. 427"). Erna Berger (soprano) with Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips. 1-12" disc. (V-12-0692). \$1.31.

(This annotation is reprinted from the May 1948 issue. It appeared in this place when the imported recording of this work was reviewed.)

We cannot imagine a finer rendition of this section of Mozart's *Mass in C minor* than the one that Miss Berger presents on this disc. Purists have much difficulty in associating this music with a religious ceremony and quite properly so; it is really a coloratura aria in the manner of the opera. If one will forget its religious significance, and accept it purely as music, he may enjoy it fully.

It is interesting to note that Mozart planned to have a newly composed mass sung at Salzburg when he brought Constanze there as his wife. He had a good portion of it ready, including a "finished sketch" of the *Et incarnatus*, which Miss Berger sings so effectively on the present disc, but for some unknown reason he never completed the work and it is known as Mozart's "Unfinished Mass."

Poulenc: Metamorphoses. One side, and **Poulenc: Le Bestiaire.** Pierre Bernac (baritone) accompanied by Francis Poulenc (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0426). \$1.31.

The composer and pianist, Francis Poulenc, and the splendid French baritone, Pierre Bernac, make a fine team. When you see both of their names on one record, you can be sure that you will hear worthwhile music artistically produced. The present disc is no exception to that rule.

Their recording of *Metamorphoses* appeared on one side of an imported disc that we reviewed in July 1947. RCA Victor coupled it with *Le Bestiaire* for the present domestic record, using that selection instead of Poulenc's *Two Poems by Louis Aragon*, which was on the reverse side of the imported disc.

Those interested in present-day French music should not pass this item by.

Purcell—arr. Britten: The Queen's Epicedium (from "Odes and Elegies"). (Sung in Latin). Peter Pears (tenor) accompanied by Benjamin Britten (piano). 1-12" disc (V-DB-6763). \$2.63.

This elegy in the grand manner appeared in 1695, a year after the death of the "good and gentle" Queen Mary. Because of the high quality of the music—it is one of Purcell's greatest works in that form—

it has lived through the ages, and while it is practically unknown in America, it is heard from time to time in England.

Peter Pears gives a fine performance of this unusual selection and is ably supported by the distinguished English composer and accompanist, Benjamin Britten. Discerning music lovers will be rewarded if they take the trouble to investigate this astonishing record.

Strauss—arr. Benatzky: Casanova—Nonnenchor. (Sung in German). Anni Frind (soprano) with orchestra and chorus conducted by Ernst Hauke. One side, and **Chabrier: Habañera.** RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. 1-12" disc (V-12-0769). \$1.31.

At long last RCA Victor has made available the famous "Nun's Chorus" from *Casanova*, done by Anni Frind (see THE NEW RECORDS of September 1947). It has been available on HMV (C-3711) for several years, and dealers who handle imported records report that it has enjoyed a steady sale. It was formerly coupled with the "Spanische Romanze" from *Casanova*, and why RCA Victor decided to couple it with Chabrier's *Habañera* we wouldn't know. Nobody will care what is on the "other side," anyway; nevertheless we are happy to report that *Habañera* receives satisfactory treatment from Mr. Morel.

Bishop—arr. La Forge: Lo! Here the Gentle Lark. One side, and **Dell'Acqua: Vilanelle.** Lily Pons (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Andre Kostelanetz. 1-12" disc (C-72752D). \$1.25.

Both of these well-known selections give Miss Pons ample opportunity to display her coloratura trills, which she does with reasonable abandon, ably aided by the excellent flautist, Frank Versaci. Her many devoted fans will likely get a lot of thrills from these spectacular renditions.

Flegier: Le Cor. One side, and **Holmes: Au Pays.** (Sung in French). Ezio Pinza (basso) with the Columbia Opera Orchestra conducted by Wilfred Pelletier. 1-12" disc (C-72751D). \$1.25.

Ezio Pinza gives fine renditions of the ever-popular *Le Cor* and the equally stirring, but not so well-known selection, *Au Pays*. Both are often encore pieces in the concerts of this distinguished basso. The reproduction is splendid.

ORGAN



French Organ Music. E. Power Biggs playing the organ of St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University, New York City. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-802. \$7.25.

Nothing has been wished for more earnestly by organ fans than a representative album of French organ music. Their fondest hopes are realized finally

by this thrilling set. The contents represent a generous group of the best to be had, and include some favorites which even the casual listener will appreciate. None of this music is in any way hard to take, and for the organ lover, it is a choice feast—an epicure's menu. The set contains: Widor's famous *Toccata* (from his Fifth Symphony) and his *Marche Pontificale* (from the First Symphony) in an abridged version; Gigout's superb *Grand Choeur Dialogue*; Boëllmann's familiar *Suite Gotbique*; Dupre's *Antiphon II*; Jehan Alain's *Litanies*; and the *Final* from Vierne's First Symphony.

While not stated on the labels, the St. Paul's Chapel organ was used, as in his previous Bach album; and if anything, sounds better than before. Enough of the atmosphere of the building is captured to enhance the total effect. The organ itself is reproduced clearly and in the fortissimo sections with surpassing brilliance and power. It's a magnificent accomplishment.

We could have wished for a bit more subtlety in registration a few times. The beginning of the Boëllmann *Toccata* is too forward, for example. All in all, though, it is a satisfying album. And we are ever so thankful for the Gigout *Grand Choeur Dialogue*, excellently played. Anyone who likes the organ, but is fed up with the everlasting release of Bach, can turn to this set with the assurance of many hours of rewarding listening. S.

Bach: Toccata and Fugue in D minor. Fernando Germani (organ). Recorded in Westminster Cathedral, London. 1-12" disc (V-C-3791). \$2.

Here is one of the finest organ recordings that we have ever heard. One has the impression of a great organ in a vast cathedral—massive resonance and yet withal a brilliance and clarity that is amazing. The English critics heaped praise upon praise on this record and we have been naturally awaiting its arrival with more than ordinary interest. It has arrived and it is worthy of all of the nice things that were said of it abroad—we are glad to say ditto, ditto.

PIANO



Copland: Sonata for Piano (1939-41). Five sides, and **Bernstein: Seven Anniversaries**—(1) For Aaron Copland. (2) For My Sister, Shirley. (3) In Memoriam: Alfred Eisner. Leonard Bernstein (piano). 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1278. \$4.75.

The two American musicians, Aaron Copland and Leonard Bernstein, seem to have an affinity for each other, and it is therefore highly appropriate that Mr. Bernstein should have been chosen to record Copland's *Sonata for Piano (1939-1941)*. This unusual work, representative of the composer's maturity in the art of writing for the piano, was composed in the period indicated in its title and had its first per-

formance with Copland at the keyboard in Buenos Aires during October 1941 at a concert of all-American music sponsored by *La Nueva Musica*. It has had many public performances since that time and was chosen to represent American music at the International Festival organized by the International Society for Contemporary Music held in Copenhagen during 1947.

It is thoroughly modern with marked rhythms accentuated in the percussive style of our present-day composers. It is interesting, never dull, and should appeal to those venturesome souls who give their attention to serious music with the new-look. This unusual work has been splendidly recorded. R.

Brahms: Intermezzo in E flat major, Op. 117, No. 1. One side, and **Brahms: Intermezzo in A minor, Op. 116, No. 2.** Artur Schnabel (piano). 1-12" disc (V-DB-6505). \$2.63.

When this exceptional record was released in England last summer, T. H., writing in *The Gramophone* (London) described it perfectly as follows:

"Schnabel plays these Intermezzi in a characteristically wayward and individual manner. He makes them sound like quiet improvisations, giving the impression that only at the end of one phrase does he think of the next. Personally I find both performances irresistibly beautiful and I think that I am captivated, not only by the beauty of the playing, but even more by the feeling of *maturity* which is behind it. Here I feel, is an artist great enough to treat Brahms in his own way and for none to be offended. All of which means that this is a fine record."

Granados: Spanish Dance No. 5 in E minor ("Andaluza"). One side, and **Marescott: Fantasque.** Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0736). \$1.31.

Here is an opportunity to become acquainted with the playing of the brilliant Italian pianist, Arturo Michelangeli. However, neither selection is of great importance and we are hoping that Mr. Michelangeli will record something more solid. In that case, it would be much easier to judge where he stands among the pianists of our day.

The surfaces of the sample disc that was sent us were not as quiet as they might have been.

Scarlatti: Sonata in F major, L. 384. One side, and **Bach—arr. Busoni: Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme** (Peters Vol. VII, No. 57). Solomon (piano). 1-12" disc (V-C-3768). \$2.

Solomon has a host of admirers in this country and each new record of his is awaited here with more than usual interest. His superb recording of Busoni's arrangement of Bach "Sleepers Wake" is going to cause at least a mild sensation among his fans over here. His performance of Scarlatti's witty little *Sonata in F*, which is on the reverse side of the present disc, won't hurt its sale a bit.

Liszt: Hungarian Fantasia (Grove's No. 26). Solomon (piano) and The Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Susskind. 2-12" discs (V-C-3761 and V-C-3762) (manual sequence). \$3.99.

Solomon makes this old war horse sound pretty important—much more important than its musical worth would indicate. A lot of folks still like this piece, and for those who are fond of it, Solomon's version is by far the best available.

VIOLIN



Beethoven: Romance No. 2 in F major, Op. 50. Gioconda de Vito (violin) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6727). \$2.63.

This lovely work for violin and orchestra has been missing from the domestic catalogs for years and so this fine recording from England is more than welcome. Vito is a splendid artist and the balance between the soloist and the orchestra is nicely maintained throughout, making this a recording that may be recommended without reservations.

The work, which dates from 1802, is of the period of the second symphony and might be considered a concerto for violin and orchestra in miniature. We are sure that music lovers on this side of the Atlantic will enjoy this recorded version when they have an opportunity of hearing it.

Hubay: The Zephyr. One side, and **Tchaikovsky—arr. Grunes: Valse sentimentale, Op. 51, No. 6** and **François Schubert: L'Abeille** and **Stravinsky: Pastorale.** Joseph Szigeti (violin) accompanied by Harry Kaufman (piano). 1-12" disc (C-72734D). \$1.25.

These little pieces of many moods are often used as encores by the distinguished violinist, Joseph Szigeti, and thus will be particularly appreciated by the host of music lovers who attend his concerts. Columbia has been very successful with the recording.

MISCELLANEOUS



Haydn—trans. Piatigorsky: Divertimento. William Primrose (viola) accompanied by David Stimer (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0689). \$1.31.

This lovely Piatigorsky transcription is in three short movements marked: *Adagio*; *Menuet*; and *Allegro di molto*. William Primrose, one of the great violists of our day, gives a performance that calls for high praise and RCA Victor has been very successful with the recording.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$9.75.

Charles Delaunay's New Hot Discography. Edited by Walter E. Schaap and George Avakian. xviii + 608 pp. Criterion Music Corporation (New York). Price \$6.

Harold Bauer, His Book. By Harold Bauer. 306 pp. Illustrated. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$3.75.

The Record Book (International Edition). By David Hall. xii + 1394 pp. Oliver Durrell, Inc. (New York). Price \$7.50.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Symphonies. (Revised edition). By Charles O'Connell. xiii + 556 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Biblestone, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CE—Cetra, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CT—Concertone, D—Decca, DI—Disc, GIO—Gregorian Inst. of America, HU—Harvard Film Service, HW—Hargail, IRCC—International Record Collector's Club, L—London Gramophone, ME—Mercury, MU—Muscraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, OK—Okeh, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofonken, S—Sonora, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, V—Victor, VX—Vox, and W—Woodwind.